DEus qui Beatum Joannem Confessorem tuum perfectæ sui abnegationis & Crucis amatorem eximium effecisti, concede ut ejus imitationi jugiter inhærentes gloriam assequamur æternam. Per Christum Dominum nostrum, &c.

prie s'il vous plait pour soeur marie Robertine

7. febr. 1978

Jan Nielsen

THE

FLAMING HART

OR

THE LIFE

OF THE GLORIOVS

S. TERESA,

Foundreſſe of the Reformation, of the Order of the All-Immaculate Virgin-Mother, our B. Lady, of Mount-Carmel.

This Hiſtory of her Life, vvas vvritten by the Saint her ſelfe, in Spanish; and is nevvly, novv, Tranſlated into English, in the yeare of our Lord God, 1642.

Aut mori, aut pati.

Either to dye, or els to ſuffer. Chap. 40.

ANTWERPE

Printed by IOHANNES MEVRSIVS.

ANNO M. DC. XLII.

TO THE
INCOMPARABLE, SOVERAIGNE
PRINCESSE,
HENRIETTA-MARIA
OF FRANCE,
QVEEN
OF GREAT BRITTAINE,
FRANCE, AND IRLAND.

MADAME

I *Presume not novv, to approach to your Maiesties presence, vvith designe to begg your Fauours, (though this, vse to be the case of euery Creature) but to pay your Maiestie a Seruice, and that, a great one, for the many Princely benefitts, vvhich I haue receiued already, from your gratious hand. For heer, I come to offer your Maiestie a meanes, of magnifying your ovvne naturall greatnes, by your*

avovving, & protecting, and enlargeing the glory of an incomparable Saint, S. Terela. *To vvhome, as I haue vvell vnderstood that already, yovv carry an extraordinary deuotion; and not only deuotion to her selfe, but affection also, to the holy Religious vvoemen of her Angelicall Order; vvhereof, the English Nation (vvhich novv enioyes the honour, to be also, yours) hath a Monastery at* Antwerpe, *vvhich needs not, perhaps, be ashamed, to appeare neer any other of the vvhole vvorld, vvhether it be, for their great, & entire contentment in Recollection; their insatiable, yet most delightfull thirst, after Perfection, & Vnion vvith our Blessed Lord; or the euerlasting Feast, of Joy, & Iubily, vvhich they solemnize, both in the harty, & high respects, vvhich they carry to their Reuerend Mother Superiour, and their true, & most tender*

loue

loue, to one another: ſo, it vvill not be vn-vvorthy, either of your ovvne greatnes, or goodnes, that, vvhen there is queſtion of conſidering the vertues, & perfections of the Glorious S. Tereſa, *and the celebrating her praiſes, and the ſtudying her Life, (I meane that Life of hers, vvhich she vvrote, vvith that moſt holy, & vviſe hand of her ovvne, vvhich I heer preſent) your Maieſtie vouchſafe to march at the very head of that vvhole Troope, vvhich may addreſſe it ſelfe, to the imitation of her Heroicall actions, and to the admiration of thoſe incomparable Graces, and Fauours, vvhich the God of Heauen, and Earth, thought fitt to infuſe, vvith his enamoured hart, and omnipotent hand, into that moſt happy Soule. For, vvho can euer, be more fitt, to patronize ſo great a Saint, as she is, then ſo great a Queen, as your Maieſtie;*

vvho, beſides your Birth, and renovvne, vvhereof (to ſpeake after the manner of men) yovv haue ſo much occaſion to bragg, haue alſo (in order to Heauen) shevved ſuch conſtancy, in the vvay of Religion, and pietye, as may iuſtly, (all things conſidered) giue cauſe to the reſt of your ovvne moſt eminent Ranke, at leaſt, to shrinke, if not to blush. For my ſelfe, to begg your Maieſties pardon, for this apparance of preſumption, vvere novv, to acknowledge ſome ſuch fault, as vvhereof, I acquitted my ſelfe, before. I vvill therefore, rather by this meanes, hope to obtaine a Suite for this Seruice; yea and that, of the moſt ſauory kind, of all other; & it is, That yovv vvill vouchſafe to imploy the Sacrifice of my vvhole Life, in obedience to any of your Maieſties leaſt commands. God make, & keep your Maieſtie, as healthy, & as happy, as this vvorld can

tell

tell howv to vvish; yea, and as the other, can tell howv to graunt; & I moſt humbly aske leaue, to doe your Maieſtie all Reuerence, at your Royall Feet.

Your Maieſties moſt humble, moſt obedient, moſt deuoted, & moſt obliged Seruant

M. T.

A word of Aduertiſment to the Reader.

To the end, that the Reader's iudgement may be kept from anie conſiderable error, concerning the perſon of the Glorious S. Tereſa, *he is humbly, and earneſtly deſired, to read the Preface, before he read the Booke; and eſpecially, that part thereof, vvhich occurrs betvveen that §. vvhich beginns, vvith theſe follovving vvords,* For she vvill tell you, &c. *And that other vvhich beginns,* But novv it vvill come fittly in, &c.

He may alſo be pleaſed, to excuſe the fevv Faults, vvhich shall be found, in the Print; the rather, becauſe it vvas performed, both in a ſtrange Countrie, and by ſtrangers.

THE

THE PREFACE, OF THE TRANSLATOVR, TO THE CHRISTIAN, AND CIVIL READER.

I Was moued (and who would not be moued?) by the Reuerend Mother *Superiour* of the *English Tereſian-Carmelites*, at Antwerpe, & the reſt of that holie Aſſemblie, to Translate, out of *Spanish*, into *English*, the Life of the Admirable, and Bleſſed Woeman, *S. Tereſa*, their holie Mother, and mine; whoſe Excellencies, and Perfections, it is hard, for anie Penn, to expreſſe; and few Harts, euen of the moſt refined, and raiſed, can fully vnderſtand, and comprehend. For, though it were tranſlated long agoe, by an eminent, and worthie Man of our Nation, in the great deuotion, which he carried to this excellent

Saint; yet he had liued, so very long, out of his Countrie; and had attended, in so serious a manner, to the acquiring of Perfection, and Knowledge, in order to the Conuersion of Soules, that, on the one side, he seemed to haue lost a little of the puritie of his owne *English* Toung, and, on the other, not to haue acquired enough of the *Spanish*; and consequently, not to haue been able, to performe the Worke, so exactly, as he desired. Since, such a Booke, as was so sublimely conceiued, by such a Hart, and so vehemētly posted-out, by such a Penn, could neuer be exactly transiated, out of anie one Language, into an other, vvithout a kind of full possession of them both; besides a great attention, & application of minde, othervvise. Some places being therfore very obscure, and manie other, more then a little, mis-vnderstood, the Booke vvas not so vvell receiued, nor so gladly, & greedily read, as it deserued. And therfore, both in honour of their renouned, and admired Parent, & in appetite also of their ovvne consolation, and perfection in Spirit, the zeale of these holy Religious

ligious vvoemen could not content it ſelfe vvith leſs, then a procuring, to get a nevv Tranſlation made, vvhich perhaps might proue, (to their thinkeing) a little leſſe imperfect, then the other.

For my part, I confeſſe, I vvonder, that ſome ſuch Reuievv, and Reformation, concerning a Publique Worke, ſo much importing the glory of Almighty God, and the honour of ſo eminent a Saint, could be forborne ſo long. But euen that very conceipt, and conſideration, did helpe to clappe the Spurrs into my Sides, towards a running through this Courſe, and Carreire, vvith all the care, & ſpeed, vvhich I could poſſibly vſe.

And heerin, though my abilityes were ſmall, yet my attention grew to be great; and ſo I conſidered ſeuerall Coppyes, and tooke alſo many opinions; and yet found, that all my diligences vvere few enow, towards the diſcharge of the multitude of doubts, and difficultyes, vvhich occurred; Partly, through the high, and abſtracted Nature of the verie Contents of the Booke; Partly, through the great length of the Periods; Partly through the

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multitude, ſometimes, of Parentheſis, euen in the ſame ſentẽce; Partly, through her forbearing to vſe thoſe Particles, in the beginning of the ſaid Sentences; as namelie, *For*, *But*, *Yet*, *Therefore*, and the like; vvithout vvhich, it is not alwayes ſo eaſie to diſcerne, whether the Diſcourſe be either continued, or interrupted or ended; and partlie, & cheiflie, by the ill printing, and vvorſe pointing, of all the Spanish Coppyes, vvhich I could euer come to ſee. All vvhich, I am faine to alleadge, by vvay of an humble excuſe, for vvhatſoeuer errour, I may haue inuoluntarilie committed, in this caſe. But howſoeuer, I heer preſent it, to the glorie of Almightie God; to the praiſe of this Excellent Saint; and to the conſolation of theſe Children of hers, vvho are no leſſe, then a kind of counterpoiſe, to the miſerie of the times, vvherein vvee liue.

But now, as ſoone as I had tranſlated the Worke, a certaine vviſe, & vvorthie man, & my freind, tooke knowledge of it, and deſired mee, by a verie earneſt letter of his, to vsher this Booke into the vvorld, vvith a *Preface* of mine owne; which

vvhich might open the Readers eye, the more easilie to behold the Saint, vvhen she followed; and so also, to giue some notice of her Children, who are following her. And though I alleadged my reasons, why this might be lesse necessarilie done, yet still, he vrged me to it; and so, I made his Will mine owne, and accordinglie, shall speake a few of my thoughts.

I say, some few of my thoughts; For, whosoeuer hath studied the person of the *Glorious S. Teresa*, vvell, vvill find so much to say, as, if he haue a minde to say all, he may doe vvel not to beginne, since it vvill neuer be in his power, to make an end; such a full sea, is this excellent Saint, of all perfection, vvhich hath neither Bottome, nor Brimme. I vvill therefore, say verie little of her heer; and that, shall cheiflie tend, to let you see, how highlie this Life, (vvich vvas vvritten by the Saint her selfe) is authorised, and hovv punctuallie it deserues to be beleiued, forasmuch as may, any vvay, concerne the truth of the Historicall part thereof, as also the excellencie of the Order,

vvhich

vvhich she both Reformed, and Erected.

But for the present, you may first be pleased to consider, that vvee find the Liues of Saints, to be vvritten, by three seuerall kindes of persons. For, some are deliuered by men, who are onlie eminēt, in the Historicall vvay; and they, deserue to be esteemed, and beleiued, for the merit of that worth, which shall appeare, vvhatsoeuer it fall-out to be.

The second sort, is, vvhen the Writers, are not onlie vvorthie Men, but are withall, so great Seruants of Almightie God, as to be acknowledged, by the Christian vvorld, for Saints; as *S. Athanasius*, vvho vvrote the Life of *S. Anthonie*; *S. Epiphanius*, of seuerall Prophets; *S. Hierome*, of *S. Paul*, and *S. Hilarion*, both of them, Heremits; *S. Gregorie* the Great, of *S. Bennet*; *S. Bonauenture*, of the Humble, and Admired *S. Francis*; and the like; who deserue a farre higher credit, then the former; in regard, that the vvriters were Saints.

The Third is, when Saints themselues vvrite their owne Liues; as the Incomparable *S. Augustin* did a great part of his,

in

in the Diuine Booke of his *Confeſſions*; vpon the exceſſe, & admiration, wherein he vvas, at the vnſpeakable Mercie of Almightie God, for remouing all the miſeries of his Soule. And the Relations of ſuch Liues, as theſe, are, incomparably, of the moſt credit of all. For firſt, no bodie knowes ſo vvell, vvhat paſſes concerning a man, as himſelf; And Saints are verie farre, from ſaying anie thing, vvhich is not exactlie true; and eſpeciallie, if the Saints be ſuch, as that they be alſo endued vvith verie great naturall parts, of Witt, and Memorie, and Iudgement, foraſmuch as concernes the Braine, or Vnderſtanding; as they vvill be ſure to be vvith Truth, and Sinceritie, & Candour, foraſmuch as may concerne the Hart, or Will. For, as theſe Morall parts vvill keep them from deceauing others: ſo, the Intellectuall, vvill ſecure them, from being deceaued themſelues; and vvill make them define, and diuide, and ſuſpect, and doubt, and aske, before they fullie reſolue, to beleiue; & much more, before they vvill publish things, to the vvorld.

And

And now, as the Incomparable *S. Auguſtin*, vvas called, by the conſideration of his owne great Sinnes, and God's greater Mercies, to declare his Life, in the neuer enough admired Booke of his *Confeſſions*: ſo alſo, did the *Glorious S. Tereſa*, the ſelf ſame thing, in effect, in this Booke; but, by direction of her Ghoſtlie Father. Not yet, that he did ſo much, as incline her to publish her owne imperfections, and ſinnes, (nay rather, he did the direct contrarie) but onlie to declare her Forme of Prayer; togeather vvith the Fauours, vvhich our Lord imparted, to her, therein. But novv she, vpon that occaſion, vvould needs make her owne Proceſse, in view of the World; & shevv (as incident to the reſt) hovv ill, she had complyed vvith Almightie God, from time, to time. And by this meanes, doth she, in effect, vveaue that great peice, of rich Cloth-of-gold, and Tiſſue, vvhich concernes, almoſt, the Hiſtorie of her vvhole Life; and novv, the ſame is hung-out abroad, to the vievv of the vvorld.

But yet, amongſt all the excellencies thereof, there is one thing, vvhich diſ-

pleaſes

pleaſes manie vvorthie, vviſe, & holie men; or at leaſt, vvhich pleaſes them leſſe, then the reſt. And it is, that vvhenſoeuer there is anie queſtion at all, of her ſelf, (in order, either to Vertue, or Vice,) she vvould neuer truſt her ovvne eyes, though they vvere ſo cleare, and good, as the vvorld knovves; but shee reſolued, to vvorke vvith Perſpectiue-Glaſſes, of different, yea, & euen contrarie kindes. For, vvhen she deſcribed her Vertues; she ſerued her ſelf, of a Diminishing-glaſſe; which made them ſeem ſo little, as to be no more, then a kind of Nothing. But, on the other ſide, when she gaue account of her Imperfections, she vvould, by no meanes, know them, by anie other name, then of Vices, and Sinnes; becauſe she tooke a Multiplying-Glaſſe, to her ſelf; for feare, leaſt els, thoſe Mole-hills should not ſeem Mountaines.

Novv, in the ſtrength of this vvel-meaning, and holie kind of errour, which she incurred (if anie errour may vvell deſerue ſo indulgent a name) she gaue her ſelf too great ſcope (if the Reader, vvould needs take her at her vvord) to

violate her ovvne excellent fame, by certaine too venturous dashes of her penn, vvhich vvas driuen too too hastily on, by the impulse of a kind of inordinate Humilitie. In such sort, as that, if a bodie vvere disposed, to trust his eyes alone, vvithout his reason, he might be easilie dravvne, to passe a verie erroneous Iudgement, vpon her Soule.

For, she vvill tell you, in tvventie places of this Booke, What a grieuous Sinner she vvas; What a multitude of great sinnes, she had (in her conceipt) committed; Hovv manie yeares, she had continued, in that dangerous state; And, in fine, hovv she conceiued, that her proper place, and particular torments, vvere prepared, for her, in Hell it self, for the euerlasting punishmēt of her Sinnes; which (she saith) she felt in Spirit. Whereas yet, in realitie, and sinceritie of truth, it may be cleer enough, (to such as vvill vnpartiallie consider, vvhat they are to iudge; and not looke through the mist, or clovvde, of that too great insatisfaction, and seueritie, vvhich she vvould be sure to carrie tovvards her self) that she vvas

vvas alvvaies farre, from committing anie Mortall Sinne, in all the courſe of her Life.

Now, the difference, in point of Iudgement, betvveen our Saint, and others, may well ſeem to haue proceeded from this occaſion, vvhich followves. They looked vpon her vvhole life, vvith the eyes of a Religious kind of reaſon; And she, vvith thoſe, euen of a kind of inordinate paſſion, (as a man may ſay) of deuotion. They, looked vpon her, as men, vvho being informed, euen by her ſelf, of the Caſe, are moſt fitt, through their indifferẽcie, to be the Iudge; Whereas she, looked vpon her ſelf, as a meer Partie; vvho muſt not, in her ovvne Caſe, be truſted, by anie meanes, ſo vvell, as her Iudge; eſpecially, vvhen that Iudge, knovves all things, as vvell as her ſelf, ſince she declares them to him. Beſides, that she expreſſes cleerly, hovv diuerſe, vvho vvere her Ghoſtlie Fathers, at the times of her greateſt imperfection, declared to her, in very poſitiue tearmes, that she vvas farre, from commiting Mortall Sinne. And note, that they paſſed

ſuch a Iudgement vpon her, at times, vvhen her ſelf profeſſes, that she Confeſſed all her Sinnes ſo entirely, as not to omitt ſo much, as euen all thoſe Veniall Sinnes, vpon vvhich she could reflect. So that clearly, by the verie vvorſt of her caſe, if anie ſuch thing, as she had euer done, vvere doubtfull; & if her Ghoſtlie Fathers aſſured her then, that it vvas not Mortall, (as indeed, they did) what reaſon could she haue, to be ſo very highly, and irreconciliably vnſatisfyed vvith her ſelf? But the truth is, she pearced ſo deeply, by meanes of Celeſtiall grace, into that endleſſe, ſpotleſſe Mine, of the Puritie of Almightie God, and the vnlimited Excellentie of his High Maieſtie, and the vnſpeakable deformitie of the leaſt Imperfection, or frailtie, when once it should be brought to appeare, before that incomparable Claritie, of the King of Glorie; And, on the other ſide, she vvas endued, vvith ſuch a ſtrange, internall kind of knovvledge of her ſelf, that it made (as I vvas ſaying before) thoſe Moates of her Imperfections, ſeem Mountaines, vvhen once, they vvere to

appeare, as in God's preſence.

She vvas alſo of ſo very ſenſible a nature (vvhich I muſt needs touch againe afterwvard) and ſo eaſily obliged, and ſo inſeparably engaged, vpon the receauing, euen of poore, vveake, little ſeruices, from mortall Creatures; & much more, vvhen Celeſtiall Fauours diſtilled dovvne, ſo very faſt, tovvards her, from that neuer-failing Fountaine of Diuine Mercies; that, for her, to find her ſelf anie vvay vngratefull, yea or ſo much, as euen vnmindfull thereof; and yet, much more, if she should proue ſo inhumanly vnkind, as, in ſtead of paying ſeruices, to commit faults (hovv light ſoeuer they might be) ſuch errours vvould ſeem, in thoſe eyes of hers, (vvhich ſtill, vvere fed, from that inflamed hart) to be really, not very much leſſe, then almoſt, as ſo manie halfe Sinnes, againſt the Holie-Ghoſt. And from this compoſition of her Minde, (both in the Naturall, and Supernaturall vvay) did grovv thoſe profound deteſtations of her ſelf; thoſe high exaggerations, of her Imperfections, and Frailties; thoſe lovvde exclamations,

againſt her ſuppoſed ingratitudes, and vnkindneſſes, tovvards Almightie God, vvhich broke (as it vvere) euen her ovvne verie hart, vvhilſt she vvas thinking; and deliuered ouer, ſuch feeling arguments of her ſad remorſe, vvhilſt she vvas vvriting, as are able, to ſtrike the vvater of teares, out of the ſtonie harts of her Readers (like the Rod of Moyſes, vvhich droue vvater out of the Rock) vvhen once, they lend their ſight, though neuer ſo little, to behold that ſvveet Obiect, of her enamoured thoughts, and expoſtulations againſt her ſelfe.

From hence it is, I ſay, that she accuſed her ſelf, after a kind of obſtinate manner, vvhenſoeuer she reflected vpon God, & her ſelf; in order to his Bounties, on the one ſide, & her diſcorreſpondences, on the other. Whilſt yet, vvhen her thoughts vvere bent, but to expreſſe the plaine order of things, after a manner meerly abſtracted, from thoſe ſuperiour Conſiderations, she deliuers ſuch truths, concerning her ſelf, as makes all theſe imputations, vvhich fell ſo fiercely vpon her Soule, out of her ovvne mouth, appeare,

peare, to be farre different; from that, vvhich she would desire, that they might be thought. And so, in conformitie vvith this, you (my Reader) shall doe vvell, to consider, in serious manner, how she, vvho spoke, after a sort, erroneously, (vvhen she vvould partially iudge of her actions, in order to the spotlesse Puritie of Almightie God, and his strict Iudgement) did yet vnfold her self, most litterally truly, vvhen she expressed her self *Viâ facti*, and related her affections, and actions, as it were, in the Historicall way.

Obserue therefore, hovv, in this vvay, she saith of her self, That she vvas euer very carefull, not to commit anie Mortall Sinne; That she had great care of her Conscience, still, forasmuch as cõcerned anie thing of that kind; and that, if euer she would be so vnhappie, as to commit anie such sinne, that she should neuer be in quiet, till she vvas disburthened of it; That she seldome receaued the B. Sacrament, but vvith abundance of teares; That, after she had once tasted of the Regalo's of that Celestiall Banquet, (vvhich she beganne to doe, vvhen she *Cap.* 4. *Cap.* 5.

vvas young) she neuer omitted to Confeſſe anie thing, vvhich she might conceaue to be a Sinne, though it vvere but
Cap.2. Venial; That she had euer great remorſe, whenſoeuer she committed anie offence, againſt Almightie God; That she did naturally deteſt all diſhoneſtie; and that she conceaued not, that there was, either anie occaſion, or anie perſon, in the whole vvorld, vvho could poſſibly ouercome that reſolution, in her; That, difficulties grew after-vvard vpon her, by occaſion of ſome Conuerſations, vvhich she had; vvhereof yet, she Confeſſing her ſelf, by way of doubt (as I haue inſinuated before) her Ghoſtlie Father made her know, that she did not offend God, therein. For, the truth of the caſe, vvas this: She vvas then, a Secular vvoeman; and the inclinations, vvhich she had to the perſon, vvere capable of being concluded, in a Marriage; beſides, that really, on her part, there vvas neuer ſo much, as one
Cap.8. impure thought; That another Spirituall man, vvith vvhome she alſo conſulted shortly after, about matter of her Soule, (by occaſion of ſome feares, into vvhich she

she grevv then, to fall) declared to her, that, though she vvere in the ſtate of neuer ſo high Contemplation, yet ſuch conferences, and conuerſations, as thoſe, vvere not to be inconuenient, for her; That she alſo vnderſtood by others, of like condition; that the conuerſations, vvhich she vſed, and the contentments, vvhich she tooke, were lawfull; That she conceaued not her ſelf, to be in Mortall Sinne; for, if she had knowne anie ſuch thing of her ſelf, she would neuer haue endured it; That she was euer a great enemie, to detraction; yea and that the vvorld vvas euer ſafe in that kind, when she vvas preſent; for, euerie bodie, vvho knew her, knew alſo, that she would not, ſo much, as endure, that this Sinne should euer be cõmitted, in her hearing; That she was neuer, any way, ſubiect to Enuy; And that she had alſo, neuer obſerued her ſelf, to offend Almighty God, either by Hypocriſie, or euen ſo much, as Vaine-Glorie; That she alwayes ſtuck, ſo very faſt, to the truth of Holie Scripture, and euen to the leaſt Ceremonie of the Holie Catholick Church, that rather

Cap. 7:

Cap. 6.

Cap. 22.

then beleiue otherwiſe, she vvould endure a thouſand deaths; That she vvas not cordially addicted, to anie thing, but to ſerue, and pleaſe our Bleſſed Lord; And that, in fine, the vvhole vvorld, ſeemed to her, to be no better, then a very Hill of Ants.

Now, this vvas the verie truth of the Caſe; and this was the ſtate of our Saints Soule, from the firſt, to the laſt. And yet, vpon the cõſiderations, which I touched before, this Bleſſed, and Heauenlie Creature (I ſay, Heauenlie, euen vvhilſt she vvas yet, vpon Earth) would needs conceaue her ſelf, once, in Prayer, not only to ſee, but euen to feele her ſelf, to be in thoſe verie torments of Hell, vvhich she held her ſelf (as hath been ſayd) to haue deſerued, for her ſinnes; and vvhich, indeed, vvould haue been litterally, and finally true, if our Lord had not preuented her, and accompanied her, and conducted her, by his Holie Spirit, and Heauenlie grace; without which, what liuing Creature can be ſafe? But that, otherwiſe, she had actually committed ſuch ſinnes, as for which, thoſe eternall tormẽts might

might be, indeed, deſerued, ſeems to be but an vngrounded, and vnſound opinion, in realitie of truth. For, the conſtant excellencie of her Life, was ſuch, as that, she beganne, at the firſt, where others might be glad, to end it; (namely, with feruent, and inflamed deſires of Martyrdome, euen when she was ſcarce eight yeares old) and both continued, & finished the ſame, afterward, in ſuch vertue, and expreſſe ſanctitie, of the higheſt kind, as that the world, may be rather willing, then able, to admire it, to ſuch a proportion, as it deſerues. And herefore, that conceipt of her great Sinnes, and of her deſerued place alſo, in Hell, ſeemes partly to haue had the true foundation, vpon the iealous, and ſollicitous, and curious, enamoured, and inflamed Affections, of the faithfull, watchfull, loyall, laborious thoughts, of our Glorious Saint; which tended, almoſt euer, towards a complying, in moſt perfect manner, with the duties, to which she held that she was liable, in her ſelf; and with the Inſpirations, by which she was ſo conſtantly ſollicited, and called vpon,

and,

and, as it were, euen Courted, by the powerfull, and pretious hart, of our Bleſſed Lord; and partly, yea and peraduenture cheifly, by the ill quarter, which she conceiued, and acknowledged her ſelf, to haue kept ſometimes, with our Bleſſed Lord, by not correſponding with his heauenly grace, and not complying, with his holie Inſpirations; and commiting ſome neglects in that kinde; whilſt yet she was ſo enarneſtly moued, by his Diuine Maieſtie, to giue-ouer certaine naturall affections, and recreations, of hers. In regard of which vnkindneſſe towards Almightie God, she might haue congruouſly deſerued, to be depriued of God's grace afterwards; and then she might alſo haue falne, by degrees, not only into greater faults, but euen into greiuous Sinnes, which might truly haue been then aſcribed, to her former, leſſer offences. And ſo it was meerly, the vnſpeakeable goodnes of Almightie God, and no merit of hers, that she was not permitted to fall, by degrees, euen as low as Hell it ſelfe, Like a man, who, in a ſmall diſtemper of bodie, neglects the help

helpe of Phiſitiáns, and growes thereby afterward, into mortall diſeaſes & death.

Now therefore, in all ſuch things, as might concerne the eſtimation, which she made of her ſelf, in order, either to the excellencie, or deformitie, of her life, there is (and let the Glorious Saint forgiue me this errour, once, of ſpeaking truth) no credit at all, to be giuen her; becauſe that ſubiect, lyes but in the way of diſcourſe; & all things, in effect, of that nature, vſe to be iuſt, of that verie colour, whereof thoſe Glaſſes be, through which they are ſeen; and I haue already shewed, that hers, were of the partiall Cutt. But as for thoſe other things, which occurred to be ſet downe, by her, in the Hiſtoricall way, or els, which are related, as hapning to the perſon of the writer, in the *vvay of fact*, whether it were more or leſſe; as namely, that she did, and ſuffered, and ſayd, and heard, and felt, & ſaw, whatſoeuer she affirmed, in thoſe kinds, whether it were in the Naturall, or Supernaturall way, there can be no queſtion made, as I haue shewed els where, but that all, was moſt certainly,

certainly, & euen moſt punctually true. For els, she either muſt deceiue, or be deceaued; whereof the former were a great impietie; (but farre enough from her) & the latter (all circumſtances conſidered, and eſpecially, in parriculars of that nature) no leſſe, then a moſt impertinent abſurditie, to be either affirmed, or beleiued; as was partly touched before.

It is true, that both in her Supernaturall Prayer, and yet more, in her Viſions, and Reuelations, there are manie things, which ſurpaſſe anie Vnderſtanding, which is but meerly Humane; but ſo alſo, are there infinit other Particulars, in the Eccleſiaſticall Hiſtorie, concerning other Saints, which, howſoeuer they ſeem, and are ſtrange, yea and much more ſtrange then theſe, yet are they generally, and moſt iuſtly admitted, to the degree of Morall beleif. For, as we Catholiques, are inſtructed, & taught, that, on the one ſide, we muſt not be ſo light, or rather in fine (to the end, that things, may haue their right names) not ſo very weake, and foolish, as to beleiue ſtrange, and ſupernaturall things, without a

mightie

mightie deale of authoritie, and proofe, (*yea and the Church her ſelf, doth moſt bitterly Excommunicate, whatſoeuer Creature in the world, who shall knowingly propound anie falſe thing of this kinde, to be beleiued) ſo on the other ſide, that they, are moſt iuſtly to be held, both rash, and childish, and foolish, who beleiue not that, which multitudes of the moſt, and wiſeſt, and worthieſt, and learnedſt, and holieſt men beleiue. Though yet ſtill, in all theſe Caſes (wherein the Church hath not expreſly declared her ſelf) we are not, to beleiue things, with Diuine Faith, but only with a Morall, & humane beleif; no, nor euen ſo much as that, but only, when they are ſo abundantly proued to be true, as that they can not rationally, be denyed, or euen doubted, by anie prudent, pious man. For, to reſolue to beleiue nothing at all, which is eleuated aboue the ordinarie courſe of naturall things, or which ſurpaſſe a man's owne capacitie, and his explicit, and deciding iudgement, at the preſent time, is not only (as I was ſaying) a very foolish, but euen a childish, and

*Note this great, & moſt certaine Truth.

and ridiculous kind of thing.

I muſt heer, put you alſo in minde, how, particularly, it is found in Holie ſcripture, that there are innumerable inſtances (and eſpecially, in the *Reuelations*, of the Bleſſed, and Beloued Apoſtle, S. Iohn) which are incomparably more repugnant, both to reaſon, and euen to Common ſenſe, then anie thing, which is related heer. And as, (how difficult and ſtrange ſoeuer, thoſe things of holy Scripture be) they muſt yet, be as entirely beleiued (and that, vpon the price, of a mans being otherwiſe, an Heretique, or a verie Pagan) as the Bleſſed Trinitie it ſelf; becauſe, in fine, the leaſt tittle of Holie Scripture, is as fully, and entirely, to be beleiued, as the verie Diuinitie it ſelf, of Almightie God; ſince the verie leaſt, and loweſt point of our Faith, depends vpon the ſelf ſame *formall reaſon*, and groũd, with the higheſt, & greateſt: So alſo, whoſoeuer shall not receaue, whatſoeuer is deliuered, by the Saints, and great Seruants of Almightie God, concerning ſuch things, as paſſe in their owne Soules, through the entercourſe,

and

and commerce of his Diuine Maiestie (*cuius deliciæ*, are, to be, *cum filiis hominum*; vvhose delight consists, in visiting, and regaling the Soules of his deerest, and most deuoted Seruants) the same being considered, by holie, and wise, & learned Discerners, and Tryers, and Iudges of Spirit, (vvhereof there is neuer vvant, in God's Church) and so, the Catholique Christian World, growing by degrees, to accept thereof, in the vvay of giuing a iust admittance, & a pious Morall credit to vvhat is related, that man, I say, shall be neither pious, nor prudēt, who reiects it; and he shall be an ignorant foole, if he deride it.

Nor is also anie of my Readers, to be scandalized a whitt, if he chance to heare Saints speake, of some materiall, and corporeall kindes of things, vvhich are represented to them, in their Visions; as namely Rings, or Crownes, or Chaines, or Mantles, or Darts, or the like (whereof there is some little mention, euen in this Booke) anie more, then he hath cause to be scandalized, at the Horses, & Riders, and Trumpets, and Seales, and Pretious

 Stones,

Stones, vvherewith the Celeſtiall Ieruſalem vvas paued, in the *Reuelation* of *S. Iohn*. For, though I ſay not, that he is neceſſarily bound, in the qualitie of a good Catholique Chriſtian, to beleiue the Particulars, vvhich are repreſented in this Booke, after anie groſſe materiall way, vvith the ſame kind of infallible, Supernaturall Faith, vvhich he is ſtrictly, and preciſely obliged to allowe, to all things, vvhich are contained in Holie Scripture (vpon the price, as I vvas ſaying) of being otherwiſe, an Heretique, or a Pagan) yet I preſume to ſay (and it ſeemes to be moſt true, and certaine) that vvhen ſuch particular Supernaturall Fauours, as aforeſayd, are vouchſafed by Almightie God, to his Saints, and are alſo admitted, and embraced, by multitudes of the learnedſt, and vviſeſt, and holieſt perſons of the vvorld; that man vvill be neither holie, no nor ſo much as learned, or wiſe, vvho not only ſhall reiect that, vvhich he hath no vvill to approue, but deride alſo that, vvhich he hath not vvitt, or grace, to vnderſtand. In a vvord, the Viſions expreſſed in Holie Scripture, muſt be

be all beleiued, by Diuine Faith, in their true ſenſe, vvhatſoeuer that falls out to be; and not the Viſions of Saints, vvith that, but vvith a farre inferiour kind of Faith; till the Holie Catholique Church, both haue defined them, and propounded them alſo, to be beleiued, by her Children.

Nor yet are yow, my Reader, whoſoeuer you may be, to be idly ſcandalized, by any meanes, at the Formes, vvhereby things are repreſented ſometimes, in the Viſions, and Reuelations of Saints; and this, vpon another, and that a very ſubſtantiall reaſon, vvhich followes heer. For, the important buſines, in thoſe caſes, is, that our Bleſſed Lord, is pleaſed to imprint, at ſuch, and ſuch times, vpon the Soules of ſuch, and ſuch of his deare Seruants, ſuch, or ſuch a kind of vertue, or Fauour, or Strength, as himſelf is pleaſed to deſigne, for the comfort, progreſſe, and perfection, of that Seruant of his. And ſo, that Seruant, conſiſting both of a Bodie, and a Soule, his Diuine Maieſtie is alſo gratiouſly pleaſed, manie times, to affect both the Bodie, and the

Soule, togeather, vvith a ſenſible kind of feeling of that grace; Thoſe outward demonſtrations (vvhich ſpeake, but, as it vvere, to the Bodie) ſeruing cheifly, but to denote, and deſcribe, in that ſort, o the vvhole man, the influences, and impreſſions, vvhich then are made, and powred out, into the Soule.

But now it vvill come fittly in, ere long, to show you that part of the Epiſtle Dedicatory, or Preface, vvhich the Famous Dominican Father, & Doctour, *Father Levvis de Leon*, thought fitt to write, both in honour of *S. Tereſa* herſelfe, & of thoſe Primitiue Daughters alſo of hers, who were firſt Founded at *Madrid*. For thereby, you will eaſily diſcerne, what a Race, that Glorious Saint had runne (eauen like ſome Gyanteſſe) in the way of our B. Lord; as alſo how cloſe, thoſe Children followed their holy Mother. Of which Mother, I shall not heer, haue roome to reflect, though I should but touch, & goe; vnleſs vvithall, I vvould make this Preface, as long as the very Life it ſelfe. And therefore, you muſt giue mee leaue, to adiourne you,

for

for more ample ſatisfaction of this expectation, to thoſe dropps, vvhich I may, perhaps, both be able, and vvilling to deriue, and draw, out of that Sea of her Perfections, if I shall finish another ſmall Diſcourſe, and Deſcription of the Saint, vvhich I intend to make, and place, as by vvay of Preface, both to certaine Exclamations, or loude Aſpirations, whereby that enamored Soule of hers, found meanes to vent it ſelfe to Almighty God; as alſo, to two short Relations, which she made for her Ghoſtly Father, in vvriting, concerning the Degrees, by vvhich, she paſſed on, in the exerciſe of vertue, and in the vſe alſo of Prayer, that ſo, the ſaid Ghoſtly Father, might be the abler to direct, & inſtruct her. In the meane time, I shall only ſay, in very few vvords (by vvay, as it vvere, of Antepaſt, till the Feaſt come in) That she vvas Of very antient, noble Birth; Of choyce Breeding; Of a gratious, & louely perſon; Of an humour, highly acceptable, and agreable, to the vvhole vvorld, vvhich knew her; Of a melting, and bleeding Nature; Of moſt Loyall, true, & tender

Freindship; Of a ſweet, & charming way, in conſeruation; Of great ſignificancy, and elegancy of ſpeech in her expreſſion, though naturall, and round, and vvithout affectation; & in particular, her Talent vvas rare, in abounding vvith the choyceſt Compariſons, which can be found. Her felicity vvas alſo great, in negotiation; for she vvas owner of a ſolid vvitt; a ſteddy, & ſound iudgement; and deep vvisdome. She had a hart, as open as day, in the exerciſe of bounty; Her compaſſion vvas moſt eminent, tovvards the releife of all Creatures in miſerye; & ſo eſpecially, vvas her ſollicitude, to conſolate, & regale all ſuch, in all occaſions, as vvere intruſted to her care; vvhilſt yet she vvould needs be vnkind, and euen, as it vvere, cruell, to her ſelfe alone.

Aboue all things, she was a moſt perfect Louer of Truth, & ſo full of matchleſs candour, & ſincerity, in all expreſſions, & vpon all occaſions, that she vvould no more haue euen ſo much, as but diſguiſed it, and much leſſe varyed from it, in the leaſt kind, eſpecially, vvhen the queſtion had, any vvay, con-

cerned

cerned her owne aduantage) then she vvould haue sold her selfe, for a Slaue.

These, I say, vvere the conditions of this admirable Creature; and these, were the parts of her Minde, vvhich yet I consider, but in the nature of Fruits. But they grew, from these Roots vvhich follow; A most profound Humility; A most inuiolable Chastity; A most strict loue of Pouerty; A most vnshaken, and inuincible Patience; in despight of sharpe Sicknesses, tormenting paines, and endlesse persecutions; A most ardent, and inflamed Charity, both towards God, & man; which bred an eager, and insatiable appetite, to winne Soules; An vndaunted Fortitude, & high Courage, and that, no lesse, in the endeauouring great things, then in the suffering hard things; A constant, continuall, Supernaturall, & most Eleuated course of Prayer, and Contemplation.

Such a kind of excellent Creature was this. But yet, whē I ouerlooked the little, vvhich I had heer set downe, I confess, it seemed, at the first, euē in mine owne eye, to be a very extraordinary *Elogium*, of her

Vertues, and parts; and, as if it might, perhaps, haue had more in it, of the Panegerick, then of a iuſt Praiſe. And therefore, before I vvould giue it paſſage to the Print, I looked attentiuely back, vpon vvhat I had read of her, concerning her reſolutions, and heroicall actions, recorded in authenticall manner, by diuerſe graue, and vviſe Authours; and in ſeuerall places alſo of her owne Workes; and particularly, vpon what is deliuered, by *Father Ribera*, in the Hiſtoricall Relation of her vvhole Life. But when I came back from thence, & compared that kind of *Deſcant*, vvith my *Plaine-Song*, concerning the Saint, I found my ſelfe to haue rather falne much too ſhort, then to haue, any way, ouer-ſhott, in this kind; and that the particulars, recounted with great authority, els vvhere, for the proofe of how she profeſſed her ſelfe, after a high, & moſt Heroicall manner, in the practiſe, & purſuite of Vertue, in order to all ſanctity, & perfection, to vvhich she aſpired, & where, by God's great mercy, she ariued, vvould haue no leſs auowed, then encouraged my Penn, to haue

haue done her much more honour, (that is, more right) if it had not been employed, by so vveake a hand, as mine. But, in the meane time, I haue considered the Example of the holy *S. Hierome*; vvho vvriting of his *S. Paula*, to *Eustochium* her Daughter, hath these vvords. *I take Iesus, and his Saints to vvitnes, as also, that particular Angell, vvho vvas the Guardian, and Companion of this admirable vvoeman, That I vvill say nothing of her, for fauour; nothing after the custome of Flatterers; but that vvhatsoeuer I am to deliaer, shall be, as if it vvere vpon mine Oath; and yet still, it vvill fall short of her merits.* And now this, shall authorise mee also, to take our Blessed Lord to witnesse, that, to the best of my poore vnderstanding, I haue not mistaken my selfe, about the celebration vvhich heer I make of our Saint; in the point of haueing praised her too much: but rather, that I am growne to be her Debtour, then her Creditour, heerin. For, if euer there haue been, in the whole vvorld, many vvoemen of more admirable parts, & perfections, both in their Intellectualls, & their Moralls, (which I

account to be, as the Simples of a Soule) & in the vſe alſo thereof, whereby thoſe Simples, grow to be mixed; and whether wee shall conſider them, in the Naturall, or Supernaturall way; it is more then I haue been able to know, either by reading, or els by Diſcourſe; & yet I haue been carefull enough, to enquire.

But now, the certainty of this truth, will yet, euen further appeare; when I shall tell you that, which followes. And it is, That when the Saint made obſeruation, & had experience of the world's great frailtie, and leſſe perfection; and that the Religious Order, and Houſe, vvhere she had entred, had obtained certaine Relaxations, and Diſpenſations, from diuerſe ſtrict Clauſes, and Conditions, of the firſt Inſtitute; and when she had alſo mett with ſome Cuſtomes, through which, euen her ſelf had receiued diſaduantage, by diſſipation, and diminution of Spirit; as namely, in regard of great, & publique reſort to the Houſe, and a multitude of vnneceſſarie Conuerſations; and eſpecially, for that they were not bound to continuall Clauſure,

but

but had libertie, to goe abroad (though yet, only by leaue of their Superiours,) to visit their Parents, and neer kinred, at some times; she grew into a full resolution, That, if euer it should be in her power, to free her self from that course; and to set more limited bounds vpon her wayes; and to inuite others also, by her example, to expresse their great desire, to gaine, and perfect Soules; she would not faile, to put that purpose of hers, in execution.

And so, after the expiring of some time, & the encountring of manie impedimēts, and the ouercoming a vvorld of difficulties, she grew to expresse her loue, to our B Lord, (but in the person of such Creatures, as for whome he dyed) to such a proportion, and in so high a kind, as to proiect, and perfect so great, and hard a vvorke, as that perhaps, no Woeman will be seen, to haue euer procured, and performed the like. For, to reforme a Religious Order, and to reduce it to the first strict Institute, is a matter of much more difficultie, then to Found one. And, for a Woeman (vvho vvas of no absolute power

power to command) to passe through so manie impediments, and to vvinne the Prize, and to adorne euen that Originall Rule it self, vvith so manie holie, and wise Documents, and Constitutions of her owne, for the raising, and true refining of Spirit, according to the necessities, and exigẽces of those present, most depraued times, makes the busines become yet more hard, and strange, on the one side, and more vsefull also, & more excellent, on the other. For, as I conceaue it to be a truth, that there is no one approued Order of Religious people, in the Holie Catholique Church, vvhich is not of the best of all others, in that vvay of Spirit, for which it was cheifly instituted by Almightie God; and especially for those times, in which it was instituted: So is it, not only pietie, but euen prudẽce also, to beleiue, that, since this Blessed Woeman, was stirred-vp by God's holie Spirit, in this Age of ours, for the redresse of our moderne, great disorders, that his Diuine Maiestie had a minde to be most particularly serued, and glorifyed by it; and that the Soules, which would consecrate them-

themſelues to him therein, might proue to be holie, and happie, in a very eminent degree, as long as they would continue attentiue, and carefull, not to ſwarue from that Spirit, which was deriued to them, from Heauen, through *S. Tereſa*, by her Prayers, and teares, and other holie meanes. Which Spirit of hers, though it euidently appeare, both by the exerciſe, and example of all Heroicall Vertue, yet particularly, it ſeemes to ayme, and point at the regular, and conſtant vſe of Recollection, & Mentall Prayer; vvhereof she ſpeakes oftneſt, and vvith moſt particular deſire, and care; and appoints two Howers, to be employed, euerie day, therein, beſides all other Deuotions of anie kind; vvhich is practiſed by all her holy Religious, and is really that time, vvhich giues them more aboundant ioy, then all the reſt. And indeed, she takes manie occaſions; not only to recommend it earneſtly, to the Children, and Succeſſours of her owne Order, but exhorts alſo all Creatures, who will haue the happines, to be the true Seruants of our Bleſſed Lord, to take

take fast hold, by this Anker, in their Nauigation through the Sea of this vvorld. In vvhich Sea, not only they, who are best shipped, but euen such others also, as haue been cast ouer board, from Grace, into the storme, and tempest of a Sinnefull life, may yet, by meanes of Prayer, proue able, yea and morally certaine, through the mercie of Almightie God, to recouer the assured Port of Saluation. For, in the iudgement of this excellent creature, this point, and practise, of *Mentall Prayer*, is the most sacred, and soueraigne help, by way, either of Preseruatiue before Sinne, or yet of remedie, or Restoratiue, after it, which can possibly be found, or ministred in this world; and indeed a kind of Manna from Heauen, which imparts all kind of Good to the Soule. Good alwayes, in the substantiall vvay; because it alwayes brings encrease of grace, & so enables men to vvinne great victoryes ouer themselues; where by, they daily grow to be the Seruants of Almighty God, more & more. And sometimes also Good, in a vvay of most soueraigne sweetnes, beyond any thing,

thing, which Flesh, & Blood knowes how to imagine. But yet, to make the Soule capable of this last, she must resolue to vntye her selfe vvholy, (and it must indeed, be wholy) not only from the firme purpose, of committing any Sinne, vvhether it be great, or small, but euen from the very fastning her affections, in any manner of inordinate vvay, to any Creature of any kind; though yet, it should not be vnlawfull in it selfe.

And a most particular care, must also be taken, by all such, as vvill follow the footsteppes, & directions of this Glorious Saint, (vpon vvhich she presses so very often, & so very hard, in twenty places of this excellent Worke,) That a Soule which pretends to serue our Blessed Lord, in this kind, as she ought, must resolue, both very faithfully, & very early, to dispose herselfe to doe it, with true, & perfect *Liberty of Spirit*; that is, with an absolute intention & determination, to doe it, meerly, because it is the holy Will of our B. Lord; and because he hath made it the meanes, vvhereby she may obtaine the pardon of her Sinnes, and acquire all

Christ-

Christian vertue, through encreaſe of Grace; and pay, both frequent, & ardent acts of Homage, & Greife, & Loue, to his Diuine Maieſtie; & procure an imitation of thoſe Heroicall vertues, which he was pleaſed to expreſſe, in his bitter Paſſion. And, aboue all things, the Saint requires vs, to take heed of haueing any mercenary reſpect at all, to receiue guſts, & ſpirituall delights, or other higher Fauours from him, in this Life; but to remitt all ſuch things, to the next; and (ſo that vvee may euer doe him true Seruice) to leaue it, with all indifferency, & conformity to our Bleſſed Lord, whether he vvill diſpence all his Fauours to vs, at one payment, in the next world; or els, by parts & portions, in this. And whoſoeuer shall be of a different minde, vvill not only diſoblige the Glorious *S. Tereſa* her ſelfe, but may alſo make this Booke, both an vnprofitable, & vnvſefull, yea & euen an inconuenient Study for his Soule.

But (to returne to the glorious actions of this Saint) That, beſides the inſtituting, or redreſſing this Order, (where she had, both men, and woemen though yet chiefly,

chiefly, her owne Sex in her eye,) she should also, being only but a Woeman, be able; so to worke vpon men, as (in despight of lesse rigour, & no little enuie) to bring them to take, as it were, the Law, at her hands; and, notwithstanding the pride of *Old Adam*, to ouer-worke them, to co-operate vvith the Grace of the *Nevv*; and to make them not disdaine to accept of her Instruction; and to apply themselues to the imitation of this Virgin, vvill not allow vs to doe anie thing, but vvonder; saue that, it was, most euidently, the hand, and the stronghand of Almightie God, vvho enabled, and strengthned this deare Seruant of his, to be the Instrument of so Heroicall a vvorke.

And all this, is so excellently set downe, by the sayd Doctour *Levvis de Leon*, as that I vvill doe both the Saint, and her Children the right, to shew them the verie Fountaine it self, from vvhence the Relation springs; and not deface, or disgrace it, by anie imperfect description of mine owne.

You are therefore to vnderstand, and

consider (for, these circumstãces are not impertinent, to the substance) that some yeares, after the death of this excellent Creature *S. Teresa*, and long before she vvas declared a Saint, by the iudgement of the Holie Catholique Church (in the Processe vvhereof, there vses euer, to be euen an excesse of difficulty, in weighing, and admitting of all Proofes) there grew a question, about the publishing of her Writings, and Workes. And, to the end, that nothing might be done therein, either by anie indiscreet zeale, or other accident, the Councel Royall of Spaine (vvhich is a Bodie of great Authoritie, & Wisdome) committed the review, of vvhatsoeuer the *Saint* had left behind her, in that kind, to be cõsidered, by some fitt, & graue person; that so, that vvhich should be found, to be truly hers, might be distinguished from other things, and so proceed to be publique, by Authoritie. This person, vvas a learned, and renowned man, a Father of S. Dominicks Order, & a Doctour, vvho liued in Madrid, at that time. His name vvas *Levvis de Leon*, as I sayd before; vvho, togeather with

with acknowledging, and approuing, yea and admiring her Writings (whereof this Life of hers, is the cheife, employed himself also, with great care; to set them out, himself. And vvhen this Booke went to the Presse, he dedicated it to the Prioresse, and Religious Woemen, of the *Teresian-Carmelites*, vvho then, vvere newly founded, in *Madrid*. And heer, you shall be entertained, vvith as much of that *Dedicatorie Epistle*, as imports the excellencie, both of the Holie Mother *S. Teresa*, and of those happie Daughters of hers, vvho already beganne to liue vnder her Rule. And these, are his verie vvords,

"I neuer saw, nor knew the Blessed "Mother, *Teresa of Iesus*, vvhilst yet, she "vvas in this world; but now, vvhen she "liues in Heauen, I know her; and doe, in "effect, continually see her, in two liuing "Images, or Pictures, of her self, which "she left amongst vs; and those are, her "Daughters, & her Bookes; vvhich serue "also, in my opinion, for very faithfull "witnesses, and superiour to all kind of "exception, concerning the proofe of

" her great vertue. For, if I had but ſeen
" the figure, and features of her face, they
" vvould haue informed me, but of that
" part of her Bodie; And if I had heard
" her ſpeake, and diſcourſe, that, might
" alſo haue declared ſome part of the
" vvorth of her Minde. But the firſt,
" vvould haue been common, to others;
" & the ſecond, might haue been ſubiect
" to errour; to vvhich theſe other, are
" not ſubiect, in vvhich I ſee her, now.
" For, as *Salomon* ſaith: *A man, may be*
" *knovvne, by his children*; And the fruits,
" vvhich anie one leaues behind him,
" vvhen he goes out of the vvorld, are the
" true teſtimonies of the life, vvhich he
" led, vvhen he vvas heer. And ſo we ſee,
" that Chriſt our Lord himſelf, vvhen he
" was pleaſed, in the holie Ghoſpel, to put
" a difference, between the Good, and
" the Bad, addreſſes men, to conſider
" their Fruits; for, *By their Fruits*, ſaith he,
" *you ſhall knovv them.*

" So that, the Vertue, and Sanctitie of
" *Mother Tereſa*, vvhich might perhaps
" haue ſeemed queſtionable, & doubt-
" full to me, vvhen I ſhould haue ſeen

her

"her heer, the ſame I hold to be, both
"very euident, and very certaine, (whilſt
"now, I ſee her not) by the view, vvhich I
"haue of her, both in her Daughters, &
"in thoſe Bookes, vvhich she hath left
"behind her. For, by the vertue, vvhich
"shines ſo brightly, in all thoſe Daughters
"of hers, vve come to know, vvithout
"anie errour at all, the great abundance
"of grace, vvhich it pleaſed Almightie
"God to vouchſafe to her, whome he
"would ordaine to be the Mother of this
"new Miracle. And really, that deſerues,
"to be held for no leſſe, then a Miracle,
"vvhich vve ſee our Bleſſed Lord to be
"doing daily, both in them, and others,
"by their meanes. Nay, if that muſt goe
"for a Miracle, vvhich happens beyond
"the naturall courſe, & order of things,
"there are, in this particular, ſo manie of
"them, vvhich are both new, and extra-
"ordinarie, as that to call them but a
"Miracle, vvere to ſay little; for they are
"rather an aſſemblie, and heape of Mi-
"racles.

"For, it is one Miracle, that a ſingle
"Woeman alone, should haue reduced

"an Order, both of Men, & Woemen, to
"Perfection. And a second, that the Per-
"fection, to vvhich she brought them,
"vvas so great, and high. And a third, to
"find, to vvhat a huge encrease, it is
"grovvne, in so very few yeares, from so
"small beginnings. And now, euerie one
"of these three, is a thing, vvhich de-
"serues particular consideration. For, if
"it belong not to Woemen, to teach, but
"to be taught, (as *S. Paul* affirmes) it
"growes instantly, to be a kind of Mi-
"racle, that a weake, & sicklie Woeman,
"should be so full of courage, as euen to
"vndertake so great a vvorke, as that:
"and vvithall, should be so full of vvis-
"dome, and efficacie, as finally, to pre-
"uaile therein; and should be also able,
"to steale the verie harts, out of the bo-
"dies of them, with whome she treated,
"that so, she might be able to giue them,
"to Almighty God; and carrie such mul-
"titudes of people, after her, towards the
"embracing of all such things, as are ap-
"prehended, and abhorred most, by
"flesh, and bloud. Whereby, me thinkes,
"it appeares, that, in a time, vvhen the

Diuel

" Diuel pretends, to triumph, in the mul-
" titude of those Infidels, vvho follow
" him; and in the obstinacie of diuerse
" Heretical Nations, vvhich take part
" vvith him; & amongst the manie vices
" of loose Catholiques, who range them-
" selues also on his side, the Maiestie of
" Almightie God, vvould be pleased (for
" the greater contempt, and scorne of
" the Diuel) to aduance, and set before
" him, not a Man, who should be valiant,
" & learned, but a poore, single Woemã,
" vvho should raise-vp, and plant a
" Banner of Defiance, against him; and
" should publiquely draw people to-
" geather, vvho might conquer him, and
" trample vpon him, and euen turne
" him, in fine, out of doores. And cer-
" tainly, he vvas also resolued, that it
" should serue for a demonstration to
" the vvorld, (and that, in a time, vvhen
" so manie thousands of men, vvere
" seeking, to venture vpon the spoile of
" his Kingdome, (some, by their erro-
" neous vnderstandings; and others, by
" their depraued life, and manners) to
" proue, how Mightie, and Omnipotent

" he was, by his introducing, & enabling
" a Woeman, vvho should both illumi-
" nate the mindes, and compose the af-
" fections, and reforme the actions, of
" manie; and that her Children should
" daily grow-vp, into greater numbers,
" towards the reparation of those ruines.
" Now, in this (as it vvere) old age of
" his Church, he hath been also pleased
" to shew vs, that his Grace is not growne
" old, and vveake; and that the strength
" and vertue of his Holie Spirit, is not
" lesse powerfull, at this day, then it was
" formerly, in those happie times of the
" Primitiue Church. Since now, by cer-
" taine meanes, vvhich are of an infe-
" riour, and vveaker kind, then before,
" he doth, either the same, or, in effect,
" the verie same, vvhich he did, then.
" For (to passe from the first Miracle,
" to the second) the Life, vvhich your
" Reuerences lead, and the Perfection,
" vvherein your Holie Mother hath
" placed you, vvhat is it, but a picture of
" the Sanctitie of the Holie Primitiue
" Church? For really, that, of vvhich vve
" read, in the Histories of those times,

the

" the ſelf ſame thing, doe vve ſee now,
" vvith our verie eyes, in your conuerſa-
" tion, and proceeding. And your Life
" demonſtrates that, by your actions, and
" vvorkes, vvhich hath lately (through
" the little practiſe thereof) ſeemed to be
" only found, in papers, and vvords. And
" that, vvhich being read, makes men
" wonder, yea and euen flesh, and bloud,
" doth hardly know how to beleiue, we
" ſee to be all accomplished, and per-
" formed, by your Reuerence, and your
" holie Communitie. For, how abſolutly,
" are you all, vntyed, and freed, from
" vvhatſoeuer, in fine, is not God? And,
" how haue you offred your ſelues-vp,
" into the armes of your Celeſtiall
" Spouſe; in vvhome, you howerly em-
" brace one another, vvith mindes of
" valiant men, though in the bodies, but
" of weake, and delicate Woemen? And,
" how doe you put in execution, the
" moſt high, and generous kind of Chriſ-
" tian Philoſophie, vvhich euer vvas ſo
" much as thought of, by men; and ſo,
" ariue, by your actions, (in order to a
" perfect life) to the exerciſe of all He-

 roicall

"roicall Vertue; vvhere, euen the witts
"of men, haue ſcarce ariued, with their
"Imagination? For, you make litter, of
"all the riches of this world; you haue
"Libertie, in hatred; & Honour, in con-
"tempt; and you loue Humilitie, and
"Mortification; and all your attention,
"and ſtudie, ſeemes euer to conſiſt, in
"gaining ground vpon Vertue, by a
"holie kind of emulation, and compe-
"tition, vvith one another. And ſo alſo,
"on the other ſide, your Spouſe keepes
"very cloſe correſpondence vvith you,
"by infuſing ſo very great ſtrength of
"delight, and ioy, into your Soules, as
"that you poſſeſſe the treaſure of true
"Alacritie, euen in your verie being de-
"priued, and ſtripped of all thoſe things,
"vvhich are wont to giue contentment,
"to poore-harted people, in this life.
"And ſo you alſo, with great generoſitie,
"tread all vvorldlie things, vnder your
"feet; as perſons, vvho be, as it vvere,
"exempted, euen from the lawes there-
"of; or at leaſt, are growne ſuperiour to
"them all. For, neither doth trouble, or
"labour vvearie you; nor Clauſure,

afflict

"afflict you; nor infirmitie, discourage
"you; nor euen death, amaze, or fright
"you; but rather yeild himself vp, to be
"conquered, by you.
"But that, vvhich in the midst of all
"these particulars, serues, to make the
"vvonder, very extreame, is the great
"facilitie, and gust, vvherewith you goe
"through all these things, which, of
"themselues, are hard enough to be per-
"formed. For, Mortification is matter of
"solace to you; Resignation, as a kind of
"Sport; & Pennance, a Passe-time. And
"you goe putting that, in execution,
"which turnes Nature, into admiration;
"and you conuert the exercise of the
"most Heroicall Vertues, into a pleasant
"kind of entertainment; and all this, as it
"vvere, in a sporting, and reioycing way;
"vvhereby, in fine, the certaintie of
"those vvords of Christ our Lord, that
"*His yoake, is svveet, and his burthen light*,
"growes to be found effectually true.
"Since no Secular Ladie, takes so much
"pleasure, in her ornaments, and attires,
"as your Reuerences find it, to be a
"thing of great ioy, and gust for you, to

lead

"lead the life, euen of Angells. And such
"doe you seem, really, to be, not only in
"the perfection of your liues, but in the
"vnion also, & resemblance of mindes,
"vvhich you maintaine therein, vvith
"one another; Since no two things, are
"more like one another, then you are all,
"amongst your selues; and euerie one,
"to euerie other; in your speech, in your
"modestie, in your humilitie, in your dis-
"cretion, in your sweetnes of Spirit; and
"finally, in your whole proceeding, and
"conuersation. For, as the self same
"vertue, and vvay of Life, animates you
"all: so doth it also frame you all, after
"one manner; and vve see, in you all, (as
"in so manie pure, Christall glasses) one
"kind of face, and countenance, vvhich
"is that, of your Holie Mother *Teresa*,
"deriued downe, and stamped vpon her
"Daughters. By meanes vvhereof, I see
"her now, (as I vvas saying, at the first)
"vvith more euidence, and clearnes,
"euen vvithout hauing formerly seen
"her; because her Daughters, are not
"only the liuelie pictures of her internall
"features, but the assured testimonies

also,

"alſo, of her perfections. And theſe, are
"communicated to you all; and they
"paſſe from one of you, to another, with
"ſo great ſpeed (vvhich makes the Third
"Miracle-vp) that, in the ſpace of twentie
"yeares (for, this falls-out to be the time,
"ſince she founded her firſt Monaſterie,
"till now) Spaine alone, is growne
"to be ſo full of her Monaſteries, that
"aboue a thouſand Religious perſons,
"are daily ſeruing Almightie God, in
"this Countrie; amongſt vvhome, your
"Reuerences (vvho are the Religious
"Woemen of that Order) shine brightly;
"and that, vvith as much difference, as
"the greater, and fairer Starres, exceed
"the leſſer. For, as it was a happy
"Woeman, who gaue beginning to this
"Reformation: ſo it ſeemes, that the
"Woemen are they, who, in all things,
"haue aduantage of others; and not only
"are the great, & guiding Lights of the
"Order, but are withall, the verie
"honour of our Nation, and the glorie,
"euen of the Age, wherein we liue. And,
"in fine, yow are thoſe faire Flowers,
"which beautifye the great barrennes,

of

"of the Times; and are certainly, the
"moſt rare, and choice parts, of the
"Church of God; & liuelie teſtimonies
"of the efficacie of Chriſt our Lord; and
"the euident proofe, of his Soueraigne
"vertue; & finally, the expreſſe patterns,
"vvhereby vvee take the daily expe-
"rience, of vvhat is promiſed vs, by our
"Faith.

"And this is now, as much, as concernes
"her Daughters; vvhich is the former, of
"thoſe two Images, or Pictures, of your
"Holie Mother, vvhereof I ſpake. Nor,
"is the ſecond Image, or Picture, a whitt
"leſſe Miraculous, then that former; &
"it conſiſts, in her Writings, & Bookes;
"vvherein, vvithout anie queſtion at all,
"the Holie-Ghoſt vouchſafed, and re-
"ſolued, that holie Mother *Tereſa*, should
"remaine, as a rare example, to the
"vvorld, &c. All theſe are the verie
words, of Doctour *Leuvis de Leon*.

By this, you therefore ſee, what iudge-
ment vvas made, at that time, of this ad-
mirable Creature, our Glorious Saint.
But, by way of full cõcluſion, to as much,
as I now intend to ſpeake of her excel-
lencies,

lencies, I must needs add a Clause, or two, vvhich I find deliuered by another eminent, vvise, & learned Authour, & it was *Father Ribera*, a Father of the Societie of IESVS, vvho vvrote her vvhole Life, at large; & together with it, & indeed, as a very part thereof, he published certaine Exclamations, or lowde Aspirations, vvhich her enamoured Soule vvas wont to make to Almighty God, together with certaine Aduertisments also, concerning the sense, and feeling of Spirit, vvhich she found in her self; vvith a signification, how she vvas affected, towards his Diuine Maiestie; and finally, how she behaued her self then, in the growth of Prayer, and Perfection. Now, all this Account of her self, had been deliuered, by her, in her owne hand, to her Ghostlie Father, (though one part of it, about a yeare sooner then the other) for the enabling him the better, to direct her; and she did it all, vvhilst she vvas yet, in the *Monasterie, of the Incarnation*, vvhere she vvas placed first, before she had setled her owne Order, & way of Life, according to the primitiue Institution thereof; though

though yet, she had euen then, begunne to ſerue our Bleſſed Lord, in great earneſt. And then alſo, did his Diuine Maieſtie rayne downe abundance of Supernaturall Fauours, vpon her happie Soule; as the ſame exact Authour declares. But, that iudgement, which he made vpon her, I will heer deliuer to you, ſince it is ſo very ſhort; and withall, ſo very highly ſignificant. For, thus he ſaith: "By this, you may diſcerne, to how great "perfection, this happie Soule arriued, "in ſo short a time, which deſerues to caſt "the world, into admiration. For, ſince "she, in her beginnings, got-vp, towards "the verie top of that Perfection, which is "wont to be acquired, in this Life, euen "by Saints; to what paſſe, would she ar-"riue, in the ſpace of two, or three and "twentie yeares, which she liued after-"wards; whilſt she daily went encreaſ-"ing, in the loue of Almightie God, by "receauing ſo manie high Fauours, from "his Diuine Maieſtie; by performing ſo "manie Pennances; by enduring ſo great "afflictions, & torments, through ſickneſs; "together with manie perſecutions, and troubles;

"troubles; by founding so manie Mo-
"nasteries; by gaining so manie Soules;
"by possessing so high Prayer; by vsing
"so continuall Mortification; & finally,
"through such an incomparable treasure,
"as she acquired afterward, by a multi-
"tude of most excellent vvorkes. For, if
"her beginnings were such, as out-stripp-
"ed euen the conclusion of very perfect
"Soules: how farre shall vve imagine,
"that she vvould be sure to ariue, and
"reach, ere she came to an end?

These are the liuely testimonies, of this last, exact, and diligent Authour. And as for that former excellent discourse, of Doctour *Levvis de Leon*, it serues also, to let vs see, very clearly, the perfections of her happie Children, the Religious Woemen of her Order. And, since euen the Christian vvorld, at large, is vvont to call, & know her, by the name of *Mother Teresa*, how much more, haue the Religious, her deare, & most dear Daughters, reason, to call her so, as they doe. Since, togeather with the strictnes of their Rule, (a strictnes yet, much more tending to the preseruing, & purifying their Mindes,

then

then, anie vvay, to the afflicting of their Bodies; (vvhatsoeuer the Diuel vvould faine make the vvorld beleiue, so to discourage the Seruants of God, from becomming his better Seruants, by liuing vnder this most holie, and happie Rule) there vvas euer so great indulgence in her, towards them, and such a tender kinde of care, ouer the health, and contentment, yea and euen, as it vvere, for the good humour of her Children, as that she might well deserue the name of a hundred thousand *Mothers*, all in one. For, that her verie kindnes, ariued euen thus farre, may be seen, in many passages both of her Rule, & of her Life. So that, vpon the vvhole matter, it vvas a kinde of hard case, to decide, whether she were of more rigour to her self; or of more indulgence, towards her Children. And she did expresly require, that her Successours should be alwaies carefull, to maintaine the verie self same sweet, and euen, as it vvere, kinde harted Spirit, in the gouernment of all such Soules, as should, euer, come to range themselues by her Order. And it seemes, that not

only

only her counsaile was imparted to them, then, but that her prayers, & protection, continues now, to the self same purpose: and that still, she shrowdes and shelters them, vnder that care. For, the self same Spirit remaines so entirely truly, amongst them, at this day, that, as they leade the liues of Angells, on the one side, so yet, doe they also, on the other, spend their time, vvith so much ioy, & gust, (through that incredible kind of peace, & vnion of minde, vvhich they possesse, as vvell in order to their Superiours, as to themselues) as if euerie one of them, vvere no lesse, then mightily euen in loue, vvith euerie other: vvhich puts them into a kind of Heauen, before their time. Nay still, she seemes, as it vvere, visibly, to worke, in all kindes, for their aduantage.

And heer, since this holie Saint tooke all the accidents, and occasions, not only of her Children, but euen of those Strangers, so extreamly, and extraordinarily, to hart, vvho applyed themselues, to obtaine her helpe, whilst she vvas yet, but an Inhabitant of this vvorld, I am confidently, yea and assuredly perswaded,

that she vvill now, haue another manner of ſolicitude, for their good, and growth, in all happines, vvho shall celebrate, and deſire to ſerue her. Which I wish, that the whole world may doe; and, for my part, I am ſo much bound to our Bleſſed Lord (for which I adore him, vvith my whole hart) as to be ſure, that I will procure to make one.

The

The short Preface, or Introduction, vvhich vvas made by the Glorious S. TERESA, her ſelfe, to this Life of hers, vvhich she vvrote.

I Could haue vvished, that, as they haue giuen me, a large kind of libertie, yea and a commandment alſo, to ſet-dovvne, both the manner of my Prayer, and the Fauours, vvich our Bleſſed Lord vvas pleaſed to doe me, they had alſo, no leſſe permitted me, to declare my great Sinnes, and vvicked Life, in very particular, and cleare manner; for heerin, I should haue receiued much conſolation. But this, they vvould not ſuffer me to doe; nay rather, in this kind, they tyed me vp, very short. And therefore I beg earneſtly, euen for the loue of our Bleſſed

Lord, that they, vvho shall reade this Diſcourſe of my Life, vvill take knovvledge, and attentiuely obſerue, that it hath been ſo very vnvvorthie, and vvicked, as that I haue not found anie one Saint, amongſt all them, vvho haue been conuerted from Sinne, to the Seruice of Almightie God, in vvhoſe example, I might be able to take comfort. For, I conſider, that, vvhen once our Lord called them to himſelf, they returned not, anie more, to offend him; vvhereas I, not only grevv vvorſe, but rather, did (it ſeemes) euen make it my verie buſines, and ſtudie, hovv to reſiſt thoſe great Fauours, vvhich his Diuine Maieſtie vvas pleaſed to doe me. As one, vvho, on the one ſide, found her ſelf obliged to ſerue him, for them, ſo much the more; and yet, vvho, on the other, obſerued vvithall, that she vvas vnable, to make him anie pay-

ment,

ment, for the leaſt part of all that, vvhich she ovved him. Let him be Bleſſed, for euer, vvho vouchſafed to expect me, ſo long; and I beſeech him, vvith my vvhole hart, to giue me grace, that I may, vvith all claritie, and truth, make this Relation, vvhich my Ghoſtlie Fathers haue commanded, at my hands; yea, and vvhich, I knovv, our Lord himſelf, hath long expected, from me; ſaue that yet vvithall, I could not eaſily preſume ſo farre, as to venture vpon it. But at leaſt, I vvish, that novv it may proue, to the glorie, and praiſe of his Diuine Maieſtie; as alſo to the end, that my ſaid Ghoſtlie Fathers, (growing heerafter, into a clearer knovvledge of me, by this meanes) may aſſiſt me, in my vveaknes, ſo much the more; that ſo, at length, I may be able, to pay ſome little part, of that much ſeruice, vvhich

I owe to our Blessed Lord; Whome, let all Creatures praise, for all Eternities; Amen.

THE

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

She shevves, hovv our Lord beganne to ſtir-re-vp her Soule, in her Childhood, to the performing of vertuous actions; and of the help, vvhich it giues, in order to this end, to be borne of vertuous Parents.

THE very hauing of vertuous Parents, and ſuch as liue in the feare of Almightie God, togeather with thoſe fauours, which I receaued from his Diuine Maieſtie, had been able, to haue made me good, if I had not been ſo very wicked. My Father was delighted, in reading good Bookes; and vſed to haue them in Spanish, that ſo his Children might alſo reade them. This conſideration, togeather with the care, which my Mother had, to make vs ſay our Prayers, and to put vs into a way of deuotion to our Bleſſed Ladie, and ſome other particular ſaints, beganne to awake, and ſtirre me vp, when I was (to the beſt of my remembrance) about ſix, or ſeauen yeares old. It aſſiſted me alſo, towards this good end, to find, that there was no meanes for me, to winne the fauour of my Parents, but by the way of Vertue. My Father was a man of much charitie, towards poore people, and of compaſſion, towards the ſick; yea, and he had ſo much pittie, euen of his ſeruants, that he could neuer reſolue to

keepe anie ſlaues, for the tendernes which he had towards them. And there being once a ſlaue, in his houſe, who belonged to a Brother of his, he cauſed him to be treated, and fed, as if he had been one of his owne Children; and ſayd, through his great compaſſion, that he could not endure to ſee ſuch as he was, vnleſs they might be made free. He was a man of much truth; nor did euer anie creature heare him, either detract, or ſweare. He was exeedingly honeſt, and chaſt. My Mother alſo, was enriched with manie Vertues; and she paſſed through this life of hers, with grieuous ſickneſſes. Her chaſtitie, and puritie, was great, in the verie higheſt degree; and though she had an abundance of Beautie, yet was it neuer ſo much as heard, that ſhe gaue occaſion, for the world to conceaue, that ſhe made anie account of it, at all. For, comming afterwards to dye, when ſhe was but three and thirtie yeares old, the order of her attire, had yet been ſuch, as might haue well become a perſon of Age. She was of a moſt ſweet diſpoſition; and yet vvithall, of a very ſolid vnderſtanding. The afflictions, vvhich she ſuſtained in this life, vvere great; and she made a moſt Chriſtian end, when she dyed.

VVe vvere three Siſters, and nine Brothers; and all, through the goodnes of Almightie God, vvere like our Parents, in being vertuous, except myſelf; though yet, I vvas the moſt beloued of them all, by my Father; and truly, till I beganne to offend Almightie God, he might ſeeme, to haue had

had some reason. For it goes to my verie hart, to remember, and consider, those good inclinations, which our Lord had giuen me; and the very little I knew, how to serue myself thereof. My Brothers also were such, in their proceeding, and way of life, as that they did not, by anie meanes, dis-assist me, from seruing Almightie God. One of them was almost of my yeares, and I loued him best, of them all; though yet, I loued them all, very much, as they also, did me. But we two, ioyned much togeather, in reading the Liues of Saints; and when I saw the Martyrdomes, through which, some of them had passed, for the loue of our Lord, me thought they had bought Heauen (where they were to see, and enioy his Diuine Maiestie) very good cheape: And myself also desired much, to dye so; though not yet, for the loue, which I found, and felt my self to beare him; but rather, that I might come, by so compendious a way, to enioy those great felicities, which I had read, to be imparted in Heauen. I associated my self therefore, to this Brother of mine, to consider, what meanes there might be, for our obtaining this end. And so we grew to resolue, that we would goe into *Barbarie*, amongst the *Mores*, and begg, by the way, as we went; that so we might come, by degrees, to loose our liues there, for our Lord. And it seemed, that he, gaue vs courage enough, for this purpose, euen in that tender age of ours, if we could haue found anie meanes, to sett it on foot; but our euen

hauing of Parents, ſeemed to be the greateſt hindrance, vve had.

We found our ſelues much amazed, to perceaue, in thoſe things, vvhich vve read, that both the Paine, and Glorie, of the next life, vvas to laſt for euer; and vve chanced, to ſpeake often, of this particular; and vve tooke pleaſure, in repeating theſe vvords, many times; For euer, For euer, For euer; and by continuing to pronounce them, long, and often, our Lord vvas pleaſed, to imprint the way of Truth, vpon my hart, in that verie infancie of mine.

But novv, vvhen I ſavv it vvas impoſſible for me, to goe, where they might put me to death, for the loue of our Lord, my Brother, and I, proiected, how to become Heremits, at home; and ſo, in a certaine Garden, vvhich belonged to the houſe, vve procured, to ſet vp ſome little Oratoryes, or Chappels, after the manner of Heremitages, the beſt we could; and vve aſſembled little ſtones, for that purpoſe, vvhich vvould inſtantly be falling downe againe; and ſo vve met vvith no meanes, to put our good deſires, in execution. But, in the meane time, I am not vvithout ſome feeling of deuotion, to conſider, hovv ſoone it pleaſed Almightie God, to giue me this kinde of tendernes towards him; vvhich aftervvards I grevv to looſe, through mine ovvne fault. I gaue Almes, as vvel as I could, though it vvere but little. I procured to be much alone, for the better doing my deuotions, vvhich vvere manie; and eſpecially that of the Roſa-

Rosarie, to which, my Mother vvas much affected; and she endeauoured also, to make vs, so. I tooke particular contentment, vvhilst I vvas playing vvith other Children, like myself, to frame certaine little things, like Monasteries, as if vve had beenReligious woemen; and me thought, I desired to be one; though yet, not vvith such vehemencie of affection, as I did those other things, vvhereof I spake.

I remember, that vvhen my Mother dyed, she left me a little less, then tvvelue yeares old; and as soone as I beganne to vnderstand, hovv great a losse I had sustained, by loosing her, I vvas very much afflicted; and so I vvent before an Image of our Blessed Ladie, and I humbly besought her, vvith manie teares, that she vvould vouchsafe, to be my Mother. And though I performed this little action, but in a plaine, and simple manner; yet, me thinkes, I may vvel conceaue, that it hath serued me, to verie good purpose; for I haue most euidently found, the fauour of this Soueraigne Virgin, concerning all things, vvherein I haue recommended myself, to her care; and, in fine, she hath brought me about, to her self.

It afflictes me to the very hart, to see, and consider, hovv poore those impediments vvere, vvhich kept me from remaining entire, and constant, in those good desires, vvhich I beganne to haue. But, O my deare Lord, since it seemes, thou vvilt vouchsafe to saue me (and I beseech thy Diuine Maiestie, that it my be so) and to shevv me so

great fauours, as thou haſt donne me; might it not pleaſe thee (not for my intereſt, and profit, but for that high reuerence, vvhich is due to thy ſelf) to take order, that this houſe of my hart, vvherein thou ſhouldſt for euer remaine, might be no more defiled? Nay, it goes, O Lord, to my verie ſoule, euen to ſay thus much; becauſe I knovv, and feele, that the fault therof, vvas vvholy mine; for, as for thee, I finde clearly enough, that there wanted nothing at all, on thy part, to ſecure me; for being totally thine ovvne, euen from that tender age of mine. And if I vvould be content, to ſeeke ſome colour, to complaine of my Parents; vvith as little reaſon alſo, can I doe that; ſince I could neuer diſcouer any thing in them, but all goodnes, and all care alſo, of my good. But paſſing on, from that tender age, to be able, to beginne to vnderſtand the benefits, and guifts of Nature, vvhich our Lord had beſtovved vpon me (vvhich others eſteemed, and ſayd, to be great) in ſteed of giueing him thankes for the ſame, I beganne, to ſerue my ſelf of them all, tovvards the offence of his Diuine Maieſtie; as I ſhall novv declare.

THE

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Which shewes, how she went loosing, in the way of Vertue; and how very much it importes, to conuerse, in childhood, with vertuous persons.

I Beleiue, that a certaine thing, whereof I will now giue account, beganne to doe me a great deale of hurt. Sometimes I grow to consider, how ill those Parents doe, who procure not, that their Children should be euer seing examples of Vertue, in all kindes. For, though my Mother were very eminent that way, (as I haue sayd already) yet I tooke not so much of that good to myself, when first I came to the vse of Reason, no nor almost euen anie thing at all; and, on the other side, whatsoeuer there was of imperfect, and ill, did hurt me much. My Mother was very particularly affected, to reade Bookes of *Caualleria*, or vaine histories; but she tooke not so much hurt, by that entertainment, as I did; because it hindred not that worke the while, about which she was; but disengaged vs, from other things, that so we might reade them. And perhaps she did it also the rather, that she might so, haue her thoughts lesse bent, vpon the memorie of the great afflictions, which she felt; and to employ also her Children in such sort, as to diuert them, from the thought of worse things. My Father was yet so much

troubled at this, that particular care vvas had, that he might not kouvv it. But I, in the meane time, remained with the cuſtome of reading theſe Bookes; and that little fault of mine, vvhich euen I, myſelf, diſcerned therein, beganne to coole my good deſires; and vvas the reaſon, vvhy I alſo grevv to faile, in the reſt; and I made myſelf belieue, that it vvas not very ill donne; though yet I ſpent manie howers, both of the day, and night, in ſo vaine an exerciſe; and though it vvere ſtill concealed from my Father. But I vvas poſſeſſed heervvith, in ſuch extremitie, that if perhaps, I could not gett ſome nevv Booke, I ſavv not, hovv I could be in contentment.

I beganne alſo to make my ſelf fine; and to deſire, to grovv acceptable, in ſeeming handſome; and I tooke much care of my hands, and of my haire, and to get choice perfumes; togeather vvith all thoſe vanities, vvhich it vvas poſſible, for me to incurre, by this meanes; vvhich, I confeſſe, vvere enow; in regard, that I vvas very curious, in this kinde. I had only, no ill intention; nor deſired I, vpon anie tearmes, that anie Creature ſhould offend Almightie God, vpon anie occaſion of mine; but I continued, in ſo great a curioſitie, for daintines, and cleanlines, as vvas euen beyond all reaſon; and thoſe things, vvhich for manie yeares, I conceaued to be of no ſinne at all, I finde novv, hovv very ill they vvere.

Novv I had certaine Coſen-germans, vvho frequented my Fathers houſe, in familiar manner; no others,

others, hauing any such libertie as that. For, my Father was very warie, and reserued, in this kinde; but I would to God, he had also been so, in respect of my Cosins; because now, I discerne the danger, that it is, for such as are to beginne to plant Vertue in the soule, to treate with persons, who know not, in true account, how great the Vanitie of the world is; but rather are inclined to awake, & stirre others vp, to cast themselues also, into the same danger. These kinsmen of mine, were, in effect, of mine owne age; or rather a little elder then I. VVe were vsually togeather; and they carried great affection to me, and in all things, which gaue them contentment, I was willing to vphold the discourse; and gaue eare, to the successes of their loue to others: and such other fooleries, as are good for nothing. Yea, and, which is worse, I grew, by these meanes, to lay my soule open, to be looked vpon, by certaine idle thoughts, which were the cause of all the ensuing ill. If I were worthie, to aduise Parents, I would wish them to take great heed, what kinde of persons they admitted, to conuerse with their Children; for, much harme, may grow from thence; since the naturall condition of Mankinde, wil neuer clime vp, so easily towards good, as decline towords ill; at least, it hapned so, to me. I had a Sister, much elder, then myself, of whose puritie, and goodnes (whereof she had great store) I tooke no part; but I failed not, to take all hurt, from a certaine other kins-woman of mine,

who had alſo, familiar entrie into our houſe. Now ſhe, was of ſo light, and guiddie a conuerſation, that my Mother had vſed ſeuerall diligences, to diuert her, from familiaritie with vs. For it ſeemes, ſhe did euen half foreſee the miſchief, which was to grow vpon me, by her meanes; and yet, on the other ſide, the occaſion was ſo great, & faire, whereby ſhe was to enter, that euen my Mother, could not tell, how to decline it. VVith this Creature (as I was ſaying) did I come to haue much delight, to entertaine myſelf. VVith her, was my conuerſation, and my diſcourſe: becauſe I found, that ſhe employed her ſelf willingly, vpon all thoſe wayes, of paſſing my time, wherein I delighted moſt. Yea, and, ſometimes, ſhe would embarke me in them, of her ſelf; giuing me part, and knowledge, of all her owne conuerſations, and vanities. Till I beganne to be familiar with her (when, I thinke, I was ſome foureteen yeares old, or rather a little more) I meane, till ſhe had wrought her ſelfe into ſo much friēdſhip with me, as to make me partake the knowlegde of all her little affaires) I am much inclined to thinke, that I had neuer forfeited the fauour of Almightie God, by anie Mortall Sinne; nor euer forſaken the feare of his Diuine Maieſtie; though yet ſtill, I feared more, to looſe my honour. This laſt point, was of power enough with me, for not permitting mee to looſe it outright; nor doe I conceiue, that any thing of this world, could make mee change that reſolution; nor was there any perſon

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aliue, who could winne mee, to yeild my ſelfe vp, to that miſery. I would to God, I had ſo abounded in ſtrength, & courage, as not to make one pace, againſt the honour of his Diuine Maieſtie; as euen a kinde of naturall conſtitution of minde, confirmed me, towards the not looſing that, wherein I held the honour of this world, to conſiſt; though yet I conſidered not, the while, that I loſt, euen that alſo, manie wayes. For the vaine vpholding heerof, I had euen an extreame reſolution; though yet, for the proper, and fitt meanes, which was neceſſarie for preſeruing it, I vſed none at all; only I was earneſt, in taking care, that I might, by no meanes, looſe my ſelf, outright.

My Father, and my Siſter, were much troubled about this freindſhip of mine, and reproued me for it, very often; but yet, they being vnable to remoue the occaſion of her coming to vs, at times, their diligences were euer wont, to fall ſhort; for, my ſagacity, & ſharpe conceipt, in contriuing anie thing, which might be ill, was very great. I am ſometimes, vpon this occaſion, in a wonder, at how much hurt, ill companie may doe; and if it had not been mine owne caſe, I could hardly beliue it; eſpecially, when it occurrs, in the time of innocent, and freſh youth; for then, doth it greateſt hurt; and I could wiſh, that Parẽts would take ſome warning by me, that ſo they might conſider it wel. For the truth is, that this conuerſation did worke ſuch an entire change vpon me, that I, who formerly, had not only a Soule, but euen

euen a kinde of naturall conſtitution, inclined to Vertue, was growne to haue, in effect, no ſemblance, or ſigne at all, thereof; and it ſeemes, that both ſhe, and yet another, who was, vpon the matter, of the ſame humour, had imprinted their owne conditions vpon me. From hence alſo, I am growne to vnderſtand, how pretious a thing, good companie is; and I hold it for as good, as a moſt certaine truth, that, if in that age of mine, I had conuerſed with onlie vertuous perſons, my ſelfe ſhould haue proued accompliſhed, in the way of Vertue; and that, if, in thoſe tender yeares, I had mett with ſuch, as would haue made it their buſines, to make me feare Almighty God, my ſoule would haue gathered ſuch ſtrength, as might haue kept it from falling. But afterward, this feare of God, growing to be loſt, the care only of my honour remained; which gaue me a kinde of torment, in whatſoeuer I did.

But now, with thinking, that ſuch, and ſuch things, would neuer be knowne, I preſumed to doe manie, which were both againſt my honour, and againſt God. In the beginning, thoſe things did me harme, as I am apt to thinke; though yet perhaps, that hapned not, by the fault of others, but by mine owne; but afterward, mine owne malice fell out, to be ſufficient, for mine owne miſchief; together with the help of my Maides, who were readie enough, for anie thing, that was naught. If anie one of them, had but aduiſed me well, it would haue ſerued my turne; but intereſt

intereſt blinded them; as my inclination, did me. And though I neuer was addicted to much ill (for euen naturally I abhorred ſuch things, as concerned diſhoneſtie) yet I liked to paſſe my time in faire conuerſation; but being afterward growne into the occaſions, the danger was neerer at hand; and that brought alſo my Father, and my Brothers, into ſome. But God, deliuered me out of them, in ſuch ſort, as that it well appeared, how he was pleaſed to procure, euen againſt my will, to preſerue me, from my totall perdition; though yet ſtill, things could not be carried ſo priuatly, as that my honour did not ſuffer preiudice by it, euen abroad; beſides a little ſuſpicion of my Father, at home. For I remember not, that they ariued to be three moneths, of my walking, vp, and downe, in theſe vanities, when they carried me to a certaine Monaſterie, in this towne, where they were wont to giue education, to ſuch, as I was; though yet, not ſo vntoward, as myſelf. But it was donne with great diſcretion, and reſerue; for only I, and a kinſman of mine, knew of it; and they ſtayed a while, for a certaine coniuncture of things, to keepe it from ſeeming new, or ſtrange; for, my Siſter was then lately married; and ſo, it would not ſeeme, ſo very handſome, that I ſhould ſtay at home alone, without a Mother.

The loue, which my Father bore me, was ſo extreame (and ſo alſo was my diſſimulation) that he could not belieue ſo much ill of me, as I deſerued; and therefore I was not falne into his diſ-

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fauour. For, the time hauing been but ſhort, though perhaps, he might happen to heare of ſome little wiſpering, yet it could neuer be deliuered to him, with anie certaintie; in regard, that I hauing ſo tender a care of myſelf, in point of honour, all my diligences were employed, vpon keeping things ſecret; and I conſidered not, the while, how impoſſible a thing it was, to hide anie thing from him, by whome, all things are ſeen. O my God! what a miſchief doth it bring vpon the world, to make light of this; and to thinke, that ſuch things can be ſecret, as are repugnant to thy will? For my part, I hold it for certaine, that many great ſinnes would be forborne, if once we would grow to vnderſtand, that the buſines doth not conſiſt, in ſaueing our ſelues harmleſſe from men; but in keeping our ſelues very farre, from diſguſting Almightie God.

During the firſt eight dayes of my being in the Monaſterie, I felt it much, euen for it ſelf; but yet more, for the ſuſpicion I had, that my vanitie was diſcouered, then for that I was placed there. For now already, I became wearie of doing ill; and I failed not, to haue great feare, of Almightie God, whenſoeuer I offended him; and I procured, to Confeſſe my ſelf often.

But after thoſe eight dayes, yea & peraduenture ſooner, I grew to be better pleaſed there, then euen in mine owne Fathers houſe. All the Religious were glad to be in my companie; for in this, our Lord endewed me with a particular grace, that

that I alwayes, gaue contentment, whereſoeuer I was; and ſo I vſed euer, to be much beloued. And though I were, at that time, in extremitie of being auerſe from becoming a Religious woeman, yet I ioyed to ſee ſo good Religious woemen, as they were, after an eminent proportion, in that houſe; and of great puritie, and obſeruance, and recollection.

But yet, notwithſtanding all this, the Diuel gaue not ouer to tempt me; and he found out ſuch perſons from abroad, as might diſquiet me, with certaine meſſages of theirs. But, in regard there was no great oportunitie for thoſe things, they quickly ceaſed; and my ſoule beganne againe, to accuſtome it ſelfe to the good impreſſions, of my firſt youth; and I ſaw, how great fauour, Almighty God doth them, whome he caſts into their companie, who are good. And it ſeemes, as if the Diuine Maieſtie had gone looking, and yet looking againe, by what meanes he might bring me back, to himſelf. Bleſſed be thou, O lord, who didſt endure me ſo long; Amen. One particular there was, which, it ſeemes, might turne a little, to my excuſe, if I had not been guiltie of ſo manie faults: And it is, that the Conuerſation, which I held, was with one, who, by way of marriage, ſeemed to make it probable, to end well. And I informing myſelf, about it, of my Confeſſarius, and of others alſo, with whome I conſulted in manie things, they told me, that I offended not Almighty God.

But now, one of the Religious was lodged, where

where we, who were secular persons, were also accommodated; and it seemes, that our lord was pleased to giue me light, by her meanes; as I will now declare.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

VVherein she treates, hovv her falling into vertuous companie, vvas the occasion of her returning to avvake good desires, in herself; And hovv our Lord beganne, to giue her some light of the errour, vvherein she had formerly been.

BVt now, I, beginning to take gust, in the good, and holie conuersation, of this Religious woeman, was ioyed to heare, how well she was wont to speake of Almighty God; for, she was both very holie, and very discreet. Of this, I conceiue, & confesse, I did neuer, at anie time, giue ouer, to be very glad to heare. She began, one day, to tell mee, how she was growne, to be a Religious woman, by the onlie reading of that place, of the Ghospell, *That manie are called; but fevv are chosen.* And she spake much to me, of the reward, which our lord is wont to giue to such, as leaue all things, for the loue of him. In a word, this good societie of hers, beganne quickly, to put to flight, those customes, and conditions, which ill companie had brought vpon me; and restored the desire of

of eternall blessings, to my thoughts; yea, and to stripp me, in some part, of that great enmitie, and opposition, against becominge a Religious woemã, which formerly had been very extreame. But now, if I chanced to see anie one, who shed manie teares for her sinnes; or els, that she abounded in other vertues; I carried a kinde of enuie towards her; though as for this hart of mine, it was so very hard, and euen impenetrable in this kinde, that if I should haue read ouer, the whole Historie of the Passion of our Blessed Sauiour, I was not able to shed a teare; and this put me to a great deale of paine. In this Monasterie, did I remaine, a yeare, and a half; and I was much improued there. I beganne to say manie Vocall prayers; and I procured, of all the Religious, that they would recommend me much, to Almightie God; to the end, that he might place mee in such a way of Life, as, wherein, I might be likelie, to serue him best. But still I did euen desire, that I might not be a Religious woman, and that this, might not be the state, which God would giue me; though yet still, I was afrayd to be married. But now, at the end of the time, when I was there, I already beganne to be more inclined to be a Religious woeman; though yet, not in that verie House where I was then, in regard of those actions of extraordinarie vertue, and pennance, which, I vnderstood, they vsed; and which seemed to me, of too much rigour. Yet there were some of the yonger sort of themselues, who encouraged

me, towards thoſe former more imperfect thoughts; for, if they all, had been of one opinion, it would haue been much, to my true aduantage. I had alſo a great friend, in another Monaſterie; and this was partly a reaſon, why, if I would be a Religious woman, I would not yet be ſo, in anie other place, then where that friend of mine was. For I carried more reſpect, to my ſenſualitie, and vanitie, then to the benefit, which I might bring to my ſoule. Theſe good thoughts of being a Religious woman, were often coming to me, by times; but they were inſtantly ſent away againe; and I could not yet perſuade myſelf, to be one.

At this time, though my ſelf were not altogether vvithout care of my cure, yet our Lord vvas much fuller of deſire, to diſpoſe me, for that ſtate, vvhich vvould be beſt, for my ſoule. He then gaue me ſo great a ſicknes, that I vvas forced, to returne home, to my Fathers houſe. And vven once, I vvas recouered, they conducted me, to giue a Viſit, to one of my Siſters, in the Countrie; for, the loue, vvhich I bore her, vvas extreame, and by her vvill, I ſhould neuer haue parted from her. Her Huſband did alſo loue me very much; and, at leaſt, he regaled me highly. And euen for this alſo, am I obliged to our Bleſſed Lord; ſince in all places vvhere I haue been, I was euer treated after this manner; notwithſtanding that I haue been, as vnthankefull to him for it, as for his other fauours.

Now by the way towards my Siſter, I had an Vnckle,

Vnckle, my Fathers Brother, vvho vvas a very aduiſed man, and of great vertue. He vvas a Widdower; and our Lord vvent diſpoſing him, for his owne ſeruice; and vvhen he grew on, to be of yeares, he left the vvorld, and became a Religious man; and ended his life, in ſuch ſort, that I beliene, he is now enioying the Viſion of Almightie God. But he vvould needs haue me (as I paſſed) remaine with him, ſome dayes. His vſuall exerciſe, vvas to reade good Bookes, in the Spaniſh toung; and his diſcours vvas moſt commonly of God, and of the vanitie of the world; and thoſe Bookes, vvould he alſo make me reade. And though I had no great liking to this, yet I pretended that I had; for, in the point of giuing contentment to others, I had euer an extreame kind of care, how deare ſoeuer it might coſt me. So that the ſame thing, vvich had been vertue in others, was a great fault in me; becauſe I often carried my ſelf therin, vvith much indiſcretion. O my God! By vvhat vvaies did thy Diuine Maieſtie goe diſpoſing me, for that ſtate, in vvhich thou vvert pleaſed, that I ſhould ſerue thee; ſince thou didſt euen force me thus, as it vvere, againſt my vvill, to force my ſelf. Be thou bleſſed for all eternitie; Amen.

Though I ſtayed not long, in that place; yet, by the effect, vvhich the vvords of Almighty God, wrought in my hart, whether they vvere read, or heard by me, together vvith ſo good companie, as that vvas, vvherein I found my ſelf then, I came to vnderſtand this Truth, vvhich I had learnt,

when I was yet but a Child, That, namely, all was nothing; and how great, the vanitie of the vvorld vvas; and that all, vvould be, ſhortly, at an end; and that I might iuſtly feare, leaſt dying in that condition, wherein I vvas, I might chance goe dropping downe into Hell. And though my vvill did not yet entirely reſolue me, to make my ſelf a Religious vvoman, yet I vvell diſcerned, that it vvas the better, and more ſecure ſtate; and ſo, by little and little, I determined, to force my hart, to embrace it. In this battaile, I remained three moneths, conſtraining my ſelf, at laſt, by this following diſcours, and reaſon: that the troubles, and afflictions, of being a Religious vvomã, could not be greater, then the paine of Purgatorie; And that I, hauing ſo vvel deſerued Hell, it vvas not to be eſteemed too much, if I remained, vvhilſt I ſhould liue, heer, as in Purgatorie, ſo that afterward, I might goe ſtreight to heauen. For this, was my deſire. But yet euen in this inclination of mine, to take this ſtate vpon me, I doubt I vvas more moued, by a kinde of ſeruile Feare, then by Loue.

The Diuel, in the meane time, repreſented to me, that I would neuer be able, to ſuffer the difficulties, and troubles of a Religious life; becauſe formerly, I had been vſed ſo delicately, and vvas ſo nice. But yet, againſt this alſo, I defended my ſelf, as vvell as I could, by the afflictions, vvhich Chriſt our Lord, endured for me; and that ſo, it vvould not be much, for me to endure ſome, for him. I ought alſo to haue conſidered, that he would

giue

giue me help, to beare them. Yet I remember not, whether I had this laſt conſideration, or no; but I am ſure, I had temptations enow, about that time. I then alſo grew, to haue great fitts of fainting, by a burning Feauer, into wich I fell; for I alwaies had little health.

But it gaue mee euen my life, at that time, that already I was growne to loue good Bookes; and ſo I came to reade the Epiſtles of S. Ierome, which holpe me to ſuch hart, and courage, as to make me reſolue, that I would impart my purpoſe, to my Father; which, in effect, was euen as much for me, as to take the verie Habit vpon mee. For I was euer ſo affected, to maintaine the point of Honour, that, mee thinkes, I could neuer haue turned back againe, vpon any tearmes, when I had firſt engaged my ſelfe, by ſpeaking any one word, to the contrary. But he loued me, to ſo ſtrange a proportion, that, by no meanes, I could winne his conſent; nor was the interceſſion of ſuch perſons, as I procured to moue him, in order to my end, of anie power at all, to preuaile. The moſt that I could get at his hands, was, that, when he ſhould be dead, I might doe, what I liſted, with my ſelf. But, as for me, I was in doubt, of mine owne great weaknes; as fearing, that I might looſe ground, and fall back againe: And ſo, I thought, it was not fitt for me, to content my ſelf with the offer which he made; and I procured therefore, to obtaine my end, by another meanes; which I will now declare.

THE FOVRTH CHAPTER.

VVherein she relates, hovv our Lord assisted her, to force herself, to take the Habit of Religion; And of the manie infirmities, vvhich he began to bring vpon her.

IN theſe dayes, whilſt I was walking on, with my hart, in ſuch determinations, or ſtrong purpoſes, as I haue heer deſcribed, I perſwaded one of my Brothers, to become a Religious man; diſcourſing to him, vpon the vanitie of the world; and ſo we, both of vs, agreed, to goe very early together, one morning, to the Monaſterie, where that friend of mine remained; who was ſhe, to whome I carried ſo great affection; though yet, in this laſt firme purpoſe of mine, I was growne to be of ſuch reſolution, that I vvould liue, vvhereſeuer I thought, I might ſerue God beſt, or my Father ſhould deſire moſt, that I might be; for now, I ſought more earneſtly, for the good of my ſoule; and made no account at all, of reſt, or eaſe. And I remember (to the verie vttermoſt, of what I am able to call to minde, and according to the verie rigour of truth) that, whilſt I was going out of my Father's houſe, I belieue not, that the ſharpnes of ſenſe, will be able to be greater, euen in the verie inſtant, or agonie of my death, then it was then. For it ſeemed to me; as if euerie bone, which

which I had in my bodie, had been disioynted from all the rest. And there being no such loue of God in me, at that time, as vvas able to quench that loue, vvhich my hart carried to my Father, and Friends; all that, vvhich then I did, vvas vvith so mighty a violence, that if God had not giuen me great help, mine owne consideration would neuer haue beē able to carry me on; but heer, he allowed me such courage, euen against myself, that I had power, to put my purpose, in execution.

At the instant of my taking the Habit, our Lord gaue me vvell to vnderstand, hovv highly he fauours them, vvho offer themselues violence, for the doing him anie seruice; though yet, no bodie had found by me, but that I entred into the vvay of Religious Obseruance, vvith much facility, and good liking. But at that verie instant, I tooke so great cōtentment, to put my self into that manner of life, as hath neuer failed me once, till this verie hower. And God changed that dryues, vvherein my soule had formerly been, into an extreame tendernes; and all the obseruances of Religion, gaue me great delight; yea, and it is a most certaine truth, that vvhilst I vvas, sometimes, going, vp, and downe, to sweepe the house, at such howers, as, before, I had been vvont to employ vpon the gallanterie, and regalo of my person; and vvent considering, that now I vvas free from that subiection, it gaue me a particular ioy; and that, so very great, that it amazed me; nor vvas it in my power, to vnderstand, from vvhence the same

ſhould come. VVhen I remembred, and cõſidered this, there could be nothing, how grieuous ſoeuer, vpon vvhich, if it vvere ſett before me, I ſhould not haue ventured to attempt. For I haue already, good experience of things enow, to aſſure me, that ſince God did help me, in the beginning, to reſolue to doe ſuch things, as theſe (vvhich being only donne for the loue of God, he ordaines, for our greater merit afterward, that our ſoules ſhould be in ſome trouble, and terrour, at the firſt; and the greater that trouble is, the greater, and the more ſauourie alſo, vvill the reward therof, fall out to be, if vve goe through, vvith the buſines) his Maieſtie vvil alſo be pleaſed, to recompenſe them, highly vvel, euen in this life; by ſuch vvayes, as he only, vvho enioyes them, can vnderſtand. This, I ſay, I haue found true, by experience, in manie particulars of great moment. And therefore, if I vvere a perſon, vvho might be vviſhed to giue my opinion, I vvould neuer aduiſe anie Creature, that, vvhen anie good inſpiration did often moue, and ſet vpon a ſoule, it ſhould giue it ouer, for feare of not performing the vvorke. For, if one goe on, meerly, and purely, for the onlie loue, of our Lord, there muſt be no feare at all, of good ſucceſſe; ſince the ſame Lord is powerfull enough, to preuaile in all things; And let him be euer bleſſed, Amen.

Theſe fauours, vvhich thou hadſt, hitherto, beſtowed vpõ me, out of thine owne meer goodnes, and greatnes, might vvell haue been ſufficient, (O thou

thou, my Soueraigne Good, and repoſe of my ſoule) to draw me towards thee, by ſo manie vvindings, and turnings, to ſo ſafe a vvay of life; and to a Houſe, vvhere there are ſo manie ſeruants of thine, of vvhome I might learne to grow vp, in pleaſing thee. But heer I know not, how I can paſſe on, to thinke of anie thing els, vvhen I conſider the manner of my Profeſſion; and the great reſolution, and guſt, vvherewith I made it; and the Eſpouſalls, vvhich I perfected vvith thee. For I cannot ſpeake of this, vvithout teares; which were to be, euen of bloud; and not vvithout the breaking of my verie hart (vvhich yet could not be too great a demonſtration) vvhen I vveigh, how deeply I offended thee afterward. Now, me thinkes, that I had reaſon before, in not deſiring ſo great a dignitie, as this; conſidering, how ill I vvere like to employ it. But thou, O my Lord, vvert pleaſed to permitt, that I might vſe this fauour ſo ill, twentie yeares togeather; and vvouldſt content thy ſelf, to be the perſon affronted, that I might be the perſon, improued. For, it ſeemes not to me now, O my God, that I made thee anie promiſe, of anie thing, but only, that I vvould keepe no promiſe, vvich I had made thee; though yet, my intention vvas not ſuch, at that time.

And yet, I finde my actions, to haue growne afterward, to be ſuch, that I may very vvell thinke, I ſcarce know, vvhat kind of intention I had. And thus, it may the better be ſeen, vvho thou art; O

my Spouſe, and my God; and who I am. For it is really, an expreſſe truth, that the grief, for my very great ſinnes, is tempered in me, manie times, by the contentment, which this conſideration giues me, that my ſinnefulnes may proue a meanes, to make the multitude of thy mercies, be vnderſtood. For, in whome, O Lord, can they euer ſhine ſo brightly, as in me; who haue, by my wicked actions, ſo obſcured thoſe great fauours, which thou beganſt to doe me? Ah, woe is me, O my Creatour; for, if I looke for anie excuſe, I can find none; nor hath anie creature the fault of it, but only my ſelf; and if I would pretend to pay thee anie thing, for the leaſt part of that Loue, which thou beganſt to ſhew me, I ſhould not know, how to employ it, vpon anie thing, but only thy ſelf; and thereby, might all be redreſſed, ſince I neuer deſerued the ſame. Nor was I euer ſo happie as to doe euen this; and therefore now, O Lord, let thy mercie vouchſafe, to ſupply all wants.

But now, the change, which I made of my life, and the difference of my food, at this time, from the former, beganne to doe me hurt, in the way of health; for though the contentment, which I had, was great, yet would it not ſerue the turne. My fitts of fainting, and ſwooning, beganne againe to encreaſe; and ſuch a hideous beating of the hart, came vpon me, as amazed all them, who ſaw it; beſides manie other infirmities. And thus I paſſed on, my firſt yeare, with a kinde of health, which was ill enough; though yet, within that time, I con-

conceaue my ſelf, not to haue offended God, much.

But my ſicknes being ſo great, that it depriued me almoſt of my ſenſes (yea and ſometimes, I was vvholy depriued) the diligences, which my Father vſed for my recouerie, vvere alſo very great; and vvhen the Doctours of thoſe parts, found no remedie, he procured to get me remoued, to a certaine place, vvhere there vvas great fame of the curing manie other infirmities; and ſo, they aſſured themſelues, that they vvould be able to doe alſo, vvith mine. That friend, vvhome I mentioned to be in that Houſe, vvent vvith me; for ſhe vvas of yeares; and in the Monaſterie, vvhere ſhe liued, they made no Vow of Clauſure. I ſtayd almoſt a yeare, in that other place; and, during three moneths therof, I ſuffred ſo exceſſiue torments, by the manner of the Cure, vvich was very rigorous, that I know not, how I vvas able to endure them; and though I did endure them, yet, me thinkes, it vvas not my Bodie, vvhich could doe it; as I vvil now declare.

This Cure vvas to be taken in hand, in the beginning of Sommer; and I vvent in the beginning of VVinter. All this meane time, I remained in the houſe of that Siſter, of vvhome I ſpoke before, vvho dwelt in the Countrie; becauſe I vvas then, neer the place; and yet it vvas very troubleſome, to be going, and coming, to, and fro. VVhen I departed from that Vncle of mine, vvhome I declared my ſelfe, to haue viſited in the vvay, he gaue me a certaine Booke, vvich is called, The third

A.B.C.; which treats of the manner of Prayer, with Recollection. Now, though in that first yeare, I had read some good Bookes, forbearing vtterly, to looke vpon anie other (for I was not ignorant, of the hurt, which such as those, had donne me) yet I knew not, how to proceede in Prayer, nor how to obtaine Recollection; and so I was very glad of this Booke, and determined to followv that way, to the vttermost of my power. And, since our Lord had already been pleased, to bestow the guift of teares vpon me; and since I delighted also in reading, I beganne to spend some good fitts of time, in solitude; and to Confesse myself very often; and, in a word, to addresse myself, by that way; esteeming that Booke to be my Maister. For I could meet with no other Maister, (I meane, a Ghostlie Father) who was able to vnderstand me; though I sought such an one, almost twentie yeares, after this time. VVhich accident, did me hurt enough, towards the making me turne back often; yea, and for the making me loose myself. But such an one, would haue daily assisted me, to lay aside, and leaue those occasions, which I tooke, to offend Almightie God.

In these beginnings, his Diuine Maiestie beganne to doe me so great fauours, that at the end of the time, when I remained there, (which was about nine moneths) in this way of solitude; (though I were not so free from offending God, as the Booke appointed; which I neglected, as holding it impossible, to continue still, so watchfull

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ouer myself) I was carefull, not to commit anie Mortall sinne; and I would to God, I had alwaies been so; but of Venialls, I made no great account; and this was that, in fine, which destroyed me. But our Lord began to regale me so much, by this way, that he vouchsafed me the fauour, to giue me Quiet Prayer; and sometimes, it came so farre, as to arriue to Vnion; though I vnderstood, neither the one, nor the other; nor how much they both, deserued to be prized. But I belieue, it would haue been a great deale of happines, for me, to haue vnderstood the certainty thereof. True it is, that this Vnion rested with me, for so short a time, that, perhaps, it might ariue to be, but as of an *Aue Maria*; yet I remained with so very great effects therof, that, with not being then, so much as twentie yeares old, me thought, I found the whole world vnder my feet; and so I remember well, that I was wont to carrie great compassion towards such, as followed the wayes of the world; though it were, but euen in lawfull things.

I procured, the best I could, to carry our Lord, who is our true Good, still present with me; and euen within me; and this was the manner of my prayer. If I thought vpon anie passage, or Mysterie, I represented it, to the interiour, of myself; and other times, I spent in reading good Bookes; which was all the recreation, that I had. For God gaue not me the talent of discoursing with my Vnderstanding, nor to help my self, by the vse of my Imagination, which I haue so heauie, and grosse,

groſſe, that euen to thinke, and repreſent within my ſelf, ſo much as the Humanitie of our Bleſſed Lord, (which I endeauoured to doe) was yet more, then I could poſſibly performe. And, howſoeuer, by this way, of not being able to employ, and ſet the Vnderſtanding on worke, in the way of diſcourſe, men may ſooner ariue to Contemplation, if they perſeuer therin; yet is it very troubleſome, and painefull; becauſe, if the employment of the will, doe faile ſo farre of obtaining the true end, as that their Loue finde no preſent Obiect to embrace, the ſoule is left, as it were, without anie exerciſe, and reſt, at all; and that kinde of ſolitude, and drynes, giues much trouble; and opens the way, to a combat, and confuſion of thoughts.

As for perſons, who haue this diſpoſition, there is need of a greater puritie of Conſcience, then for ſuch others, as are able to worke, and diſcourſe, by way of the Vnderſtanding. For he, who is able to diſcourſe, vpon what this world is; and vpon what he owes to Almightie God; and how much he ſuffered for him; and how little himſelf is able to ſerue him; and vvhat he beſtowes vpon ſuch, as loue him; vvil be able to draw a doctrine from thence, vvhich may defend him from impertinent thoughts, and occaſions, and dangers. But he, vvho can not ſerue himſelf thereof, runnes more hazard; and ſhall therefore doe vvell, to employ himſelf much, vpon reading; ſince, on his owne part, he knowes not, hovv to help himſelf.

This manner of proceeding, is ſo very extreamly

reamly painefull, that, if the Directour, who in-
ructs, ſhall vrge him much, to pray, without
eading (which greatly helpes to recollect the
erſon, who proceeds thus; yea and is neceſſarie
or him, though it be little, which he reades; ſaue
nly in time, and place of Mentall Prayer, which
ie is not able to make) I ſay, if without this help,
hey make him ſtay much in Prayer, it wil be im-
oſſible, for him, to laſt long, therin; and beſides,
t wil doe him hurt, in point of health; for it is ex-
reamly painefull.

Now it ſeemes, that our Lord prouided ſo for
ne, as that I ſhould not finde anie Creature, to
nſtruct me; for it had been impoſſible for me, I
hinke, to continue to endure this extreame diffi-
cultie, and theſe great aridities, through my not
being able (as I was ſaying) to diſcourſe. In all
theſe times, I neuer durſt beginne to pray, without
a Booke in my hand, vnleſſe it were inſtantly,
vpon my hauing Communicated; and as hartily
was my ſoule afrayd to be in Prayer, without a
Booke, as if I had been to fight, with a multitude
of people; but by this remedie, of a good Booke,
which was as a Cõpanie of Guard, or as a Buckler,
vpon which, the blowes of manie thoughts, were
to be receaued, I went on, with comfort. For, that
drynes vvas not ordinarie vvith me, though I had
it alwaies, vvhenſoeuer I had no Booke in my
hand; but then, my ſoule was inſtantly in diſorder;
and my thoughts vvandred, vp, and downe. But
vvith reading, I beganne to recollect them, and
carried

carried my hart chearfully, and delightfully on; yea, and, manie times, in the verie opening my Booke, I found myself need no more. Sometimes also, I read little; and sometimes, much; according to the fauour, which our Lord vvas pleased to doe me, more, or lesse. And it seems to me, that if, in those beginnings, whereof I speake, I might haue had Bookes, and meanes to continue in solitude, there would haue been no danger, which could haue been able, to depriue me, of so great a good. And I am also apt to thinke, that, by the fauour of Almightie God, it would haue proued so, if I had had a Directour, or some person, who might haue counselled me, to auoide occasions, in those beginnings, and to make me forsake them quickly, if I had been entred into them; yea, and, though the Diuel should then, haue set openly, vpon me, I thinke, that I would neuer haue been brought, to offend God grieuously againe; but he vvas so very craftie, and I so wretched, that all these resolutions of mine, did me little good; but the time, vvhich I spent in Gods seruice, did me very much, towards the bearing those terrible sicknesses, which I endured, vvith so great patience as his Diuine Maiestie vouchsafed to bestow vpon me.

I haue often considered the great goodnes of Almightie God, euen with amazement; and my soule had been regaled, to see the magnificence of his mercie towards me. Let him be blessed for all things. For I haue seen, in most euident manner, that he hath not left anie one good desire of mine, without

without recompenſe, euen in this life; and how imperfect, and full of fault ſoeuer, my vvorkes vvere, yet this Lord of mine, vvent bettering, and perfecting them, and giuing them vvorth; and my ſinnes, and miſeries, he vvould inſtantly hide; Yea his Diuine Maieſtie hath permitted, that euen the eyes of ſuch, as ſaw them, ſhould be blinded, and their memories faile, vvhen they vvould remember them. He euen guilds our faults, and makes that vertue ſhine bright, vvhich he, the ſame Lord, conueyes into me; and vvherein, he offers me euen a kind of violence, that I may receaue it.

But I vvill now, returne to ſpeake of thoſe things, vvhich they haue commanded me to declare: And I ſay, that, if I be to ſet forth, after a particular manner, in vvhat ſort our Lord proceeded vvith me, in theſe beginnings, I ſhall need another manner of vnderſtanding, then mine owne, to performe all that, vvith aduantage, for vvhich I am obliged to him, in this particular; and to publiſh mine owne ingratitude, and vvickednes, ſince he hath forgotten it all. Let him be bleſſed for euer, vvho hath endured ſo much, at my hands; Amen.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

She prosecutes the relation of the great infirmities, vvhich she had; and of the patience vvhich our Lord gaue her, in them; and hovv benefits are dravvne, out of mischiefs; as vvil be seen, by a certaine particular, vvhich hapened to her, in the place vvhither she vvent, to be cured.

I Forgot to relate, how, in the yeare of my Nouitiate, I suffered much disquiet, about some things, which, in themselues, were of little importance; but I found my self, to be blamed manie times, vvithout my hauing made anie fault; and this, I tooke vvith trouble, and imperfection enough; though yet, I endured it all, through the contentment, which I had, to be a Religious woeman. When they obserued me, to loue Solitude so vvell, and saw me shed teares sometimes, (which yet indeed, vvas for my sinnes) they thought, yea, and, they sayd, that it grew, but from some inward melancholie, and disgust. For my part, I had a good inclination, to all the obseruances of a Religious life, saue only, that I knew not, how to endure anie thing, vvhich might carrie, so much, as an apparance of contempt, vvith it; for I delighted in being esteemed. I vvas curious, about vvhatsoeuer, I tooke in hand; and I vvould needs thinke this, to be vertue in me, thongh yet, this will

will neuer ſerue me, for a diſcharge, becauſe I knevv vvell enough, hovv to procure all thoſe things, vvhich might giue me guſt; and ſo, ignorance vvill not free mee from blame. It vvas a defect in this Monaſterie, that it had not been founded, in much perfection; and I, (as being vvicked enough) vvent roundly on, to that, vvherein I ſavv there vvas imperfection; but layd no hold at all, vpon the reſt, vvhich vvas good.

There vvas a Religious vvoeman, at that time, and in that place, ſick, of a very grieuous infirmitie, vvhich put her to extreame paine; for ſhe had certaine Vlcers in her bodie, vvhich grew from great obſtructions; and thereby, did ſhe diſcharge, vvhatſoeuer ſhe tooke. She dyed quickly, of that diſeaſe; and vvhereas I found, that all the reſt of our Communitie, had great apprehenſion, and feare, of the like; for my part, I had much enuie at her patience; and I begged of Almightie God, that, in caſe I might be fauoured by him, vvith that vertue, he vvould ſend me vvhat ſickneſſes he ſhould thinke fitt; and I thought, I feared no diſeaſe in the vvorld; for I vvas ſo bent, and ſet vpon the gaining of eternall Happines, that I reſolued to compaſſe it, hovv deare ſoeuer, it might coſt. Nor yet, am I vvithout vvonder, euen at this; for euen thē, I did not thinke, that I had vvrought my ſelf, into the loue of Almightie God, as, aftervvards, I conceaued my ſelf, to haue it, vpon my beginning, to frequent the vſe of Prayer. But only I vvas growne, to haue a certaine light,

vvhich ſhevved me, hovv all things, vvhich com to an end, deſerue little eſteeme; and hovv thoſ Bleſſings, vvhich, being eternall, may be obtained are of mightie value. His Diuine Maieſtie, did alſ heare me, in this; for, before tvvo yeares vver expired, I grevv to be, in ſuch condition, that howſoeuer my diſeaſe vvere not of that othe ſort, yet, I belieue, that one, vvhich I had, for thre yeares togeather, vvas, not a whitt of leſſe trouble, and torment to me, then that other vvas to her; as I ſhall now relate.

The time being come, vvhich I vvas expecting, in that place, where I declared my ſelf to remaine, with my Siſter, for my better Cure, they carried mee, vvith care enough, from the regalos of my Father, of my Siſter, and of that Religious woemã, my friend, vvho, formerly, vvas come away, vvith me; and, indeed, ſhe loued me very much. And now heer, did the Diuel beginne, to diſcompoſe my ſoule; though yet, Almightie God, drew much good from thence.

There vvas a certaine Churchman reſiding in that place (to vvhich, I vvent, for cure) of very good qualitie, and vnderſtanding; and he vvas alſo, not vnlearned. Now I beganne to Confeſſe my ſelf vvith him; for I vvas euer, a friend of learning; but yet, it did my ſoule much hurt, to meet vvith Ghoſtlie Fathers, vvho vvere but indifferent in that kind; becauſe they vvanted, what I needed. And therfore, as for me, I haue found by experience, that, vvhen Ghoſtlie Fathets, are vertuous men,

men, and of holie cõuersation, it is better, that they haue no learning at all, then but a little. Because, either such as haue none, are vvont to trust themselues, vvithout asking the opinion of more learned men, then they are; neither should I also, trust them; and, for my part, I vvas neuer deceaued, by anie solid learned man; yea, and euen those others also, vvould certainly, I thinke, not haue deceaued me, but only, perhaps, they erred, because they knew no better. Now, I thought, it vvas sufficient, and that I vvas bound to nothing, but to believe them, when that, vvhich they taught me, vvas according to the more large opinion, and of more libertie; for, if they had been more restrained, I am so vvicked, that I should haue gone to others. But that, vvhich vvas a Veniall sinne, they told me, vvas no sinne at all; and that, vvhich vvas a most grieuous Mortall sinne, they said vvas but Veniall. This did me so much hurt, that it must not goe for a strange thing, to heare me speake of it heer, for the better aduertisment of others, vvhome I vvould very faine saue, from so great a mischief. For I see vvell, that in the presence of God, this vvas no discharge of me, from fault; for it ought to haue been enough for me, that the things, vvere of themselues, not good, to make me preserue my self, vvholy, from them. I believe, Almighty God permitted, for my sinnes, that both they should be deceaued, and deceaue me; as I, also, deceaued manie others, by telling them, that verie thing, vvhich I had been told. I con-

tinued, I thinke, in this blindnes, more then ſeauenteen yeares, till a Father of S. Dominicks Order, a great learned man, vnbeguiled me, in ſome things; and they, of the Societie of IESVS, did ſo vvholy terrifye me, by agrauating thoſe ill beginnings, of mine; as I vvil ſhortly declare.

But now, I confeſſing my ſelf, to that other Eccleſiaſticall perſon, of vvhome I vvas ſpeaking before, he grew to affect me, in extreame manner; becauſe then, indeed, I had little to Confeſſe, in compariſon of vvhat occurred afterwards; nay, I had not very much, from the time of my entring into Religion. The affection of this man, vvas not ill; but yet, by the exceſſe therof, it grew to be, not good. He vvell vnderſtood already, that I vvould not reſolue, vpon anie tearmes, to doe anie thing, vvhich vvas grieuouſly offenſiue to Almightie God; and he alſo aſſured me of as much, concerning himſelfe; and ſo, our conuerſation grew to be frequent. But, in thoſe times of conference, which vve had, I vvas ſo fully poſſeſſed, and euen ſwallowed-vp, by the thoughts of Almightie God, that the greateſt guſt I had, was to be ſpeaking of him; and I, being then, ſo very young, it put him to a kinde of confuſion, to ſee it; and through the great affection, which he bore me, he beganne to diſcouer his owne miſerie to me, which was not ſmall; for they were then, almoſt ſeauen yeares, that he had been in a very dangerous ſtate, by his affection, and conuerſation, with a certaine woeman of the ſame towne; when yet, he ſayd

Maſſe,

Maſſe, all the while. Now, this was ſo publick a thing, that he had, already, loſt his honour, and fame; and yet no bodie, aduentured to ſpeake againſt it: Neither did I, thinke fitt to doe it, though I were much troubled, to ſee, in what caſe he was; becauſe I loued him much. For I had this part of follie, and blindnes, that euen heer, I thought it fitt, to be gratefull, and to keep faire quarter, with one, whome I loued. But curſed be that quarter, and way of proceeding, which extends it ſelf, ſo farre, as to be againſt the law of God. This is a very madd kind of errour, which is vſed now, ſo much, in the world; and it puts me, almoſt, out of my witts, to ſee, that wee ſhould owe, all that goodnes, which men doe vs, to the goodnes of God; & yet, that wee ſhoud eſteeme it, for a vertue, not to breake this friendſhip with men, though it ſhould offer to carrie vs away, againſt him. O ſtrange blindnes of the world! O, that thou wouldſt be pleaſed, to let me be, the moſt vngratefull creature, that liues, towards the ſayd whole world, ſo that yet, I were not vngratefull, to the leaſt haires breadth, againſt thee. But, alas, I haue proceeded very contrarily, to this courſe, whereof I ſpeake, in punishment, of my other ſinnes.

I procured, in the meane time, to informe myſelf, concerning this man, by meanes of the domeſticks of his houſe; and ſo I came, to vnderſtand more, of his miſerie; but yet, I found withall, that the poore ſoule was not altogether ſo extreamly

faultie, as men thought; becauſe, that wretched woman, had bewitched him, by a certaine little Idoll of copper, which ſhe had prayed him to weare about his neck, for loue of her; and no bodie had been of power enough, to make him leaue it. For my part, I confeſſe, I cannot believe the buſines of ſuch witchcrafts, as this, in anie expreſſe, and determinate manner; but yet, I vvil relate, vvhat I ſaw, for the better aduiſing men, to take heed of all vvoemen, vvho proceed in ſuch ſort, as this; And, to the end, that men may believe, that, vvhen vvoemen come to looſe the ſhame of God, and the vvorld (for they are, euen more obliged, to be honeſt, and chaſt, then men) there is no truſt at all, to be repoſed in them; for, ſo that they may haue their vvills, and that the loue, vvhich the Diuel plants in them, may not be croſſed, they neuer care, vvhat they doe. But as for me, though I had been very vvicked, yet I neuer fell into anie thing of this nature; nor euer pretended to doe ill; no, nor, if I ſhould haue been able, would I euer yet haue forced anie bodie, to affect me. Our Lord kept me alwaies from this; whereas, if euer he had left me to my ſelf, I ſhould certainly, haue donne as ill, in this kind, as in other; for, in me, there was no truſt to be had. But now, when I came to vnderſtand this ſtorie, I beganne to ſhew him more affection. My intention, indeed, was good heerin, but yet my action, faultie; for, I ſhould not haue committed the leaſt ill, for the obtaining of the greateſt good, that could be thought,

thought. I discourſed to him, very ordinarily, of Almightie God, vvhich, perhaps, might doe him some good; though yet, I am more apt to thinke, that the great affection, vvhich he bore me, vvas the thing, which wrought more vehemently vpon him; for, to doe me a very great pleaſure, he gaue me his little Idol, vvhich I inſtantly cauſed, to be caſt into the riuer. After this, he beganne quickly (like ſome man, vvho had been awaked, out of a profound ſleep) to goe recouering, and remembring all that, vvhich he had donne, in thoſe paſt yeares, and to be amazed at himſelf; and ſo, bewailing his miſerie, he came, by thoſe degrees, to abhorre it. Our B. Ladie, vvithout all queſtion, aſſiſted him much; for he vvas very particularly deuoted to her Immaculate Conception; and his cuſtome euer vvas, to celebrate that Feſtiuitie, vvith great ioy. In fine, he vtterly gaue ouer, ſo much as once, to ſee that vvoman anie more; and could neuer ſatisfye himſelf, vvith thanking Almightie God very much, for the light, vvhich he vouchſafed to giue him. And ſo, iuſt vpon that day twelue-moneth, vvhen I had knowne him firſt, he dyed. But, already, he vvas growne, to ſerue Almighty God, in very ſerious manner; and, though I neuer could perceaue, that the great affection, vvhich he bore me, vvas ill, yet it might haue been more pure; and ſo alſo, there vvas no vvant of occaſions, vvherein, if the preſence, and aſſiſtance of God; had not been cloſe at hand, his Diuine Maieſtie might haue been much offended. But,

whatſoeuer I might then, haue conceaued to be Mortall ſinne, I vvould, certainly, not haue committed it; and euen his ſeeing that diſpoſition in me, might, perhaps, make him loue me the better. For, all men, I belieue, are more the friends of thoſe vvoemen, vvhome they ſee inclined to Vertue; yea, and euen, for thoſe other things, to which they pretended, ſuch vvomen gaine more, vpon ſuch men; as I ſhall declare afterward. But I hold it for very certaine, that his ſoule is in the vvay of ſaluation; for he dyed very vvell; and being grovvne ſo free from that occaſion, it ſeemes, our Lord vvas pleaſed, that he ſhould be ſaued, by this meanes.

I remained in that place, three moneths, vvith extreame affliction; for, the Cure vvas, by much, too hard, for my complexion; and ſo, at the end of two moneths of thoſe three, the roughnes of thoſe remedies, did euen, as it were, make an end of my verie life; and withall, the rigour of my harts-ſickneſſe, of which I went to be cured, was growne to be much more fierce; in ſuch ſort, that, now and then, it ſeemed to me, as if my verie hart, had been peirced, and penetrated, with ſharp teeth; ſo that they were afrayd, I would runne mad. By this great loſſe, and want of ſtrength, (for I was able, to take no food at all, except it were liquid, and that, ſuddainly) I had a continuall burning Feauer, and I was totally conſumed; for they had daily giuen me a Purge, for almoſt a whole moneth togeather; and indeed, I was euen

ſo

o burnt vp, that my ſinnewes beganne, all, to hrinke; and this, with ſo inſupportable torments, hat I could not take anie reſt, either by day, or night; and all this while, I was alſo oppreſſed, with a moſt profound ſadnes of minde.

With ſuch a kinde of gaine, in point of health, as this, my Father brought me back to his houſe, where the Phiſitians came to viſit me againe; and they all, gaue me vtterly ouer; for they ſayd, that, beſides all the reſt, I was ſetled in a Hectick Feauer. But this troubled me, very little; for that, which afflicted me, was the ſharp, and bitter paine, which neuer gaue me ouer, bur vexed me, euen all alike, from head to foot. For, the torment of the ſinnewes, is a kinde of intollerable thing, as the Doctours affirme; and eſpecially, when they all ſhrinke vp, as mine did; and certainly, if I had not loſt the merit of it, through mine owne fault, the torment was ſtrong enough, to haue intitled me to it.

I continued not, aboue three moneths, in this rage of paine; but it ſeemed, euen a kinde of impoſſible thing for mee, to endure ſuch a heape of afflictions, all, together. And now, I am euen amazed at my ſelf, and I hold it for a great fauour of our Lord, to conſider the patience, which his Diuine Maieſtie was pleaſed to giue me; for it was euident, that it came from him. It aſſiſted me alſo much, towards the hauing this patience, that I had read the hiſtorie of Iob, in the Moralls of S. Gregorie; and our Lord ſeemes to haue preuented

uented me ſo, by that meanes; as alſo with hauing begunne, ſo to vſe Prayer, as that I might be able to carrie my paine, with much conformitie, to his holie will. The conuerſation of my hart, was wholy with him; and I carried theſe words of Iob, very vſually, both in my thought, and in my mouth: *Since vve haue receaued bleſſings, and benefits, at the hand of our Lord; vvhy ſhould vve not alſo, ſuffer afflictions?* And I conceaued, that this, holpe to giue me courage.

At length, came the Feaſt of our B. Ladie, in Auguſt; for, till then, from the April before, had my torment continued; though yet it had been greater, in the three laſt moneths. I then made haſt, to goe to Confeſſion; for, I euer tooke much contentment, to Confeſſe often. My friends thought, that it was feare of death, which inuited me, to be ſo deuout; and ſo, to the end, that I might not be put into apprehenſion, my Father would not let mee Confeſſe. O inordinate, and irregular loue, of fleſh, and bloud; ſince, though I had ſo Catholick a Father, and ſo full of prudence, and conſideration, in all his actions, which euen abounded in him, (for, this could not be an effect of ignorance) yet he might haue donne me hurt enough, by this meanes. That night, I fell into ſuch a Trance, as continued to keepe me, neer foure dayes, without the vſe, almoſt, of anie of my ſenſes; and ſhortly, they came to giue me the Sacrament of Extreame Vnction; and euerie hower, or rather euerie moment, it was expected, when I ſhould expire,

expire, they being as diligent in saying the Creede *a* in my hearing, as if I had vnderstood them; yea sometimes they held me for so certainly to be dead, that afterwards, I found the drops, of the holie *b* Wax-candles, about mine eyes. The affliction of my Father, was great, for his not hauing permitted me to goe to Confession. Manie outcryes, and manie prayers, were made to Almightie God, for me; and blessed be he, who was pleased to heare them; for, the Graue remaining open, in the Church of my Monasterie, a day and a half, where my bodie was expected, to be interred; and my Funerall, hauing been already celebrated, by the Religious men of our Order, in another towne, where it was conceaued, that I was dead, our Lord was yet pleased at length, that I should returne to my self; and so instantly, I would needs goe to Confession. I receaued also the B. Sacrament, with manie teares; though yet, in my opinion, they were not shed, with that sense, and grief, for only my hauing offended Almightie God; which might haue serued, to saue my soule, if the errour, into which I was brought, by them, who had told me, that they were not matters of mortall sinne, (which afterward I saw plainly, that they were) might not serue my turne. For, the torments, wherewith I remained, were intollerable; and my vnderstanding not very sharpe, but rather dull; though yet (as I conceaued) my Confession were entire, of all things, whereby I might thinke, that I had offended

a *Many vse to repeat the Creed, in the presence, and as in the person, of such, as are neer expiring; by vvay of fortefying thë, at that time, against the temptations of the Diuell.*

b *VVhen persons are neer expiring, attendants vse to be very neer them, vvith hallowed Candles.*

fended God. For, this mercie, did his Diuine Maieſtie vouchſafe to allow me, amongſt others, that, after I had once begunne to receaue the B. Sacrament, I neuer omitted to Confeſſe anie thing, which I conceaued to be a ſinne, though it were but Veniall; Though yet ſtill, me thinkes, that, without doubt, my ſoule might haue runne hazard, not to be ſaued, if I had dyed then; in regard, that, on the one ſide, my Ghoſtlie Fathers had been ſo meanly learned; and, on the other ſide, and indeed, on manie ſides, in regard, that, in my ſelf, I was ſo wicked.

But this is alwaies a moſt certaine truth, that, when I returne to a thought of this paſſage, and conſider, how it ſeemes, as if our Lord had raiſed me againe, from death to life, I am filled with ſo huge an amazement, that I remaine, euen as it were, all quaking, within my ſelf. And now, me thinkes, it were well, O my ſoule, that thou wouldſt gather this iuſt reſolution, from that great danger, out of which, it pleaſed our Lord, to deliuer thee; that, although thou wouldſt not fly from offending his Diuine Maieſtie, for Loue, yet, at leaſt, thou ſhouldſt forbeare to doe it, for Feare. For he might haue taken thy life from thee, a thouſand times, when thou wert in a more dangerous ſtate; and I thinke, that I ſhould not ſay too much, if I did ſpeake of a thouſand times more; though he, perhaps, may chide me, who commanded me to vſe moderation, in the recitall of my ſinnes; and yet I doubt, that I haue painted them

them out, too fauourably, and faire. But I begg of him, for the loue of our Lord, that he will not once thinke, of making me diminish my faults; because the magnificence of Almightie God, is to be discerned thereby, and how much he is pleased to suffer, and endure, from a soule. Let him be Blessed for euer; and let it also please his Diuine Maiestie, that he may rather consume me quite, then that I should euer leaue to loue him more.

THE SIXT CHAPTER.

She treates, of how much she owed our B. Lord, for his giuing her, Conformitie, to his holie will, in so great afflictions; And how she tooke the glorious S. Ioseph, for her Intercessour; and how aduantagious, that Deuotion proued to be.

I Remained, during those foure dayes of Agonie, or Trance, in such state, that only our B. Lord is able to know, the vnsufferable torments, which I felt in my self. My toung was deeply bitten by me, in manie places. My throat, with hauing taken nothing, and by reason also of my very great weaknes, could not swallow, so much as a drop of water, without choaking. Me thought, I was totally disioynted; and my head, in extreame disorder. I was also, as it were, all row'ed

rowled vp, and contracted, as if I had been a Bottome of Packthridd; for, in this, did the torments of those dayes fixe themselues, without my being able, once to stirr, either hand, or foot; arme, or head; (vnlesse they moued me) anie more, then as if I had been dead. Only, I thinke, I was able to wagg one single fingar of my right hand. Now, for anie bodie to touch me, in anie kinde, there was no meanes at all; for, my whole person, was so affected, and afflicted, as that there was no enduring, to haue it touched. In a sheet, they would be remouing me, now, and then, according to the occasion, with one, at one end therof, & another, at the other; and this lasted, till Easter. Only this I had, by way of ease, that, if I were not approached, and touched, these torments would be ceasing, manie times; and then, vpon the account of my being in lesse paine, I was content, to affirme my self to be well. But indeed I was much afrayd, least my patience should beginne to faile me; and therfore, I was not a little pleased, to find my self, without those sharpe, and continuall torments; though yet I had them, after an vnsupportable manner; togeather with a very great detestation of food, whilst I had those fierce colds, (which, indeed, were extreamly fierce) of a double Quartane, which I was also, then, growne to haue. About this time, I made so very great hast, to returne to the Monasterie, that I got my self to be carried away, as I was. And they receaued her, whome they expected for dead, with a soule, which

which was yet in the bodie; but the bodie it self, worse then dead, through the paine they saw, it endured. The great extremitie of my weaknes, cannot be related; for I had nothing left, but my skin, and bones; and I must say, that I continued thus, aboue eight moneths; for I was directly a Cripple, (though yet I were then, on the mending hand) vpon the verie point of three yeares. When now, I began to goe vpon all foure, I thanked God, as for a good degree of amendment. But I passed through all these afflictions, with great cōformitie, to the holie will of Almighty God; yea, and (vnlesse it were in the verie beginnings) with much alacritie, and ioy. For I esteemed it all, as nothing, being compared with those paines, and torments, wherein I had been before; and I was wholy resigned then, to God's holie will, although he should haue left me in that state, for euer. I am of opinion, that all the anxietie of my desire, to recouer, was only, that I might apply my self to Prayer, all alone, as I had been instructed; but for this, there was no meanes, in the Infirmarie. I Confessed my sinnes very often; I spake with them, much, of God; in such sort, as that it edified them all; and indeed, they were amazed to see the patience, which our Lord imparted to me. For, if it had not come, from the hand of his Diuine Maiestie, it seemed a kinde of impossible thing, to endure such a deale of torment, with so much contentment.

A point of great moment, that fauour was,

which our B.Lord had vouchſafed to doe me, by giuing me Prayer; for, this, made me come to know, what it was to loue him; and from that little time, which I ſpent therein, I found theſe vertues to be growne vp, freſh in me; though yet, they were not ſtrong, nor able to hold me vpright, in ſtrict account. I ſpake not ill of anie Creature, how little ſoeuer it might be; but my ordinarie cuſtome, was, to auoide all manner of detraction; for I, alwaies, had this thought preſent with me, that I was neuer to wiſh, nor to ſay, anie ſuch thing of anie Creature, as I would not haue them ſay of me; and I tooke this, ſo extreamly to hart, in all ſuch occaſions, as might occurr (though yet, not ſtill, ſo very perfectly, when ſometimes, anie great occaſion was offered me, to breake my Rule) that this was my conſtant vſe; and I perſwaded ſuch, as were wont to be much in my companie, and conuerſation, ſo earneſtly to this practiſe, that it grew, alſo, vp, with them, into cuſtome. By this meanes, it came to be commonly vnderſtood, that whereſoeuer I chanced to be, all abſent perſons were ſafe; and ſo were they alſo much more conceaued to be, when anie of my neer friends, or kindred, or others, whome I had inſtructed, were concerned. Though, in other things, I haue a great account to make to Almightie God, for the ill example, which I gaue them. I beſeech his Diuine Maieſtie, to forgiue thoſe manie ill things, whereof I haue been cauſe; howſoeuer, I was not ſo, with ſo wicked intentions, as

the actions ſucceded ill, afterward.

I ſtill remained with great liking, to enioy Solitnde; and I alſo loued, in particular manner, to diſcourſe, and treat of things, concerning Almighty God; and if ſtill, I could find, with whome; that, gaue me more contentment, and euen recreation, then all the politenes, or rather, I thinke, I may ſay, groſsnes, of the conuerſation of the world could doe; and I loued to Confeſſe, and Communicate oftner, then I had donne; and to deſire it much; and to be extreamly affected, with reading good Bookes; and to haue ſo extraordinarie a ſorrow, for hauing offended Almightie God, that manie times, I remember, how I durſt not aduenture, to put my ſelf into Prayer; becauſe I feared that exceſſiue paine, which I was ſure I ſhould feele, in the qnalitie of a great puniſhmēt, for my offences. And this, grew afterward, to ſuch an extremitie, that I know not, to what, in fine, I may well compare this torment. But now, this neuer happened to me, either more or leſs, for anie feare at all, but only when I remembred thoſe regalo's, which our Lord had been pleaſed, to vouchſafe me, in my Prayer; and the verie much, that I owed his Diuine Maieſtie, for thoſe high Fauours; and when I ſaw, how ill I payd him, for all his goodnes, I was no longer able to endure it. Yea, and I found my ſelf alſo, extreamly offended with my ſelf, euen for the manie teares, which I ſhed, for the fault, when I ſaw the ſo little amendment, which I made; whilſt, neither my reſolutions, nor the

paine, and care, wherein I was, not to fall back againe, when once the occasion should be offered, were sufficient to stay me. For then, euen my verie teares, would seem deceiptfull to my verie self; and my fault would also appeare, so much the fowler, because I saw the great fauour, which our Lord was pleased to doe me, by imparting those teares to mine eyes, and so great repentance to my hart. I procured also to Confesse my self often; and so, in my opinion, I did what I could, on my part, to restore my self, to the state of grace.

But, all my miserie, indeed, consisted, in that I pluckt not the occasions of Sinne, vp, by the root; and partly also, in those Ghostlie Fathers, who assisted me little; for if they had once directly declared to me, the danger, wherein I was, from time to time; and that I was in obligation, not to haue passed my howers, in such conuersations, I am very confidently perswaded, that, all, would haue been quickly redressed; for I should neuer haue endured, to passe one day, in Mortall sinne, if I had vnderstood the case.

All these signes, and hopes, of my endeauouring, to feare, and serue Almightie God, were come to me, by meanes of Prayer; and the greatest of them all, was, that I walked, as it were, all wrapt vp, in loue; for, as for the punishment of sinne, it neuer once appeared before me. All the while, that I was so sick, I continued to keep a very close guard, vpon my Conscience; for as much

as

as might concerne Mortall Sinne. But, O my deare Lord, how vehemently did I desire, to be restored to my health, that I might procure to serue thee, so much the better; whereas yet, in verie deed, it was the occasion of all my miserie. But now, when I found my self so lame, and euen such a Cripple, and that, whilst I was yet so very young, and how the Phisitians of this world, had dressed me, and to what state, they had brought me, I resolued, that I would apply my self, to those of the other, to the end, that they might cure me; for I still desired to recouer my health, though yet I endured my sicknes, with great alacritie. And I would be thinking, and considering sometimes, that if, by enioying my health, I might chance be damned, it would be better for me, to remaine still, as sick as I was; but howsoeuer, I conceiued, that I should be able, to serue Almightie God, much better, if I could enioy my health. Now, this is the abuse, and errour, which deceaues vs, not to resigne our-selues entirely, to the disposition, and good pleasu-re, of our Lord; who knowes best, what is fitt for vs. But, in the meane time, I got manie Masses sayd, for this purpose; and I resorted also, to the vse of other solid, and approued Prayers; for I was neuer a friend of certaine odd deuotiõs, which are vsed by diuers persons, and especially by woemen; with some odd Ceremonies, which I could neuer endure, since I vnderstood, that they sauoured of Superstition; howsoeuer other folkes were moued by them. And so I tooke, for my Aduocate, and

Lord, the Glorious S. Ioseph; and I recommended my self much, to him; and I haue seen clearly, that this Father, and Lord of mine, hath drawne me, as well out of this necessitie, as out of other greater; when there was qnestion of Honour, and Losse of the Soule; and that, with more benefit, and aduantage, then euen my self could tell, how to desire. Nay, I cannot remember, that hitherto I euer desired anie thing, by his meanes, which he hath failed to obtaine for me; and it is able, euen to amaze me, when I consider the great Fauours, which Almightie God hath donne me, by meanes of this Blessed Saint; and the dangers, both of Bodie, and Soule, out of which, he hath deliuered me. In such sort, as that it seemes, our Lord hath giuen the grace, and power, to other Saints, to succour men, in some one kinde of necessitie of theirs; but I finde, by good experience, that this glorious Saint, succours vs, in them all; and that our Lord will make vs vnderstand, that as he would be subiect to S. Ioseph, vpon earth, and that (by enioying the name, of his Father, and by being, as it were, his Directour, and Tutour,) he might command him: so also he would now, in Heauen, grant, whatsoeuer this Saint should desire. This truth, hath also been seen, by the experience of others, whome I haue desired, to recommend themselues to this Saint; and now, manie are growne to be deuoted to him; and my self also, haue fresh experience of this truth.

For my part, I procured to celebrate his Festi-

uitie,

nitie, with all the solemnitie, I was able to vse; but yet, with more vanitie, then true spirit; desiring, that it might be performed, with much curiositie, and exactnes; though yet still, with good intention. But I euer had this, of ill; That if our Lord enabled me, at anie time, to doe anie thing, which was good, it would be full of imperfections, and faults; whereas, towards the doing anie thing amiss, and for the exercising of curiositie, and vanitie, I vsed much diligence, and dexteritie, and cunning; our Lord pardon me for it. And now, I would faine perswade all the world, to be deuoted to this glorious Saint, for the great experience, which I haue had, of the blessings, that he obtaines for vs, of Almightie God; nay, I haue neuer knowne anie one, who is seriously deuoted to him, and performes him particular seruices, whome I finde not also, to goe proceeding on, in vertue; for really, he assists those soules much, which recommend themselues to him. And to my best remembrance, there are diuers yeares, wherein I haue desired somewhat of him, vpon his Festiuall Day, and I haue euer found it granted; and if, peraduenture, my petition had some little of the indirect, belonging to it, he redressed it, and set it streight, for my greater good.

If I were anie such person, as had authoritie to write, I would gladly enlarge my self heer, to make particular relation, of the Fauours, which this glorious Saint hath obtained, both for me, and others; but, to the end, that I may doe no

more, then I am commanded, I must be shorter, in manie things, then I would; and more large in others, then is needfull; like one, in fine, who hath little discretion, for the doing of anie thing, which is good. Only I begg, for the loue of Almightie God, that, whosoeuer can belieue me, will try the truth, of what I say; for he shall find by experience, how greatly a good thing it is, to recommend himself, to this glorious Patriarch, and to be deuoted to him. Especially such, as giue themselues to Prayer, should alwaies be affectionate to this Saint; for I know not, how, one can thinke of the Queen of the Angells, at those times, when she suffered so much, during the Infancie of our Lord Iesus; and not giue thankes to S. Ioseph, for the great assistance, which he gaue them, at that time. Whosoeuer wants a Maister, who might instruct him to pray, let him take this glorious Saint, for his guide; and he shall neuer loose his way.

I beseech our Lord, that I may haue committed no errour, in presuming to speake of this Saint; for though I thus professe, and publish my self, to be deuoted to him; yet haue I been euer faultie, in the not doing him reall seruices, and in not imitating his vertues. But now, he did like himself, by procuring, that I might be able, to rise, and walke, and be no longer a Cripple; and so I did also like my self, in making so ill vse of this fauour.

But now, who would euer haue imagined, that

could ſo ſoone, fall back againe, after my re-ceiuing ſo manie regalo's, at the hands of Al-mightie God; and after his Diuine Maieſtie, had vouchſafed to giue me ſome Vertues, which (euen, as it were, of themſelues) did awake, and ſtirr me vp, to his ſeruice; and after I had ſeen my ſelf, euen, as it were, dead, and in ſo imminent dan-ger, to be condemned to Hell; and after he had raiſed me againe, both in Bodie, and Soule, in ſuch ſort, that all they, who ſaw me, were euen amazed to finde, that I could, ſo long, be aliue. But, what is this, O my Lord, and my God? Is this life to be ſtill, ſo dangerous, which we are to liue?

Euen now, whilſt I am writing this, me thinkes, that, by this fauour, and mercie, I might be able to ſay with S. Paul, (though yet, not with ſuch per-fection, as he ſayd it) that now, *It is not I, vvho liue; but thou*, O my Creatour, *vvho liueſt in me*; according to the experience, which I haue had ſome yeares, by that little, which I am able to vnderſtand of my ſelf; and ſtill thou holdeſt, and keepeſt thy hand ouer me; and I find my ſelf, full of deſires, and good purpoſes; and, in ſome ſort, I haue proued alſo (euen by experience of manie things, in theſe late yeares) that I would, by no meanes, doe anie thing, which ſhould contradict, or croſs thy will, how little ſoeuer it might be; though yet, I well beliеue, that I committ manie offences, againſt thy Diuine Maieſtie, euen without my vnderſtanding it. And it alſo ſeemes to me, that there could not, ſo hard a thing be ſet before me, which I would

not execute, for loue of thee, with great reſolution; and ſometimes, thou haſt ſo aſſiſted me therein, as that ſuch things haue taken effect; and, for my part, I care not, a whitt, for the whole world; no, nor for anie creature, which is in it; nor can I find, that anie thing at all, giues me guſt, which ſwarues from thee; and euerie thing, which is not thou, ſeemes no leſs, then a very heauie croſſe to my hart.

Yet I may eaſily deceaue my ſelf heerin; and ſo, I thinke, I doe; for, I doubt, that I poſſeſſe not all this, whereof I ſpeake; but yet thou ſeeſt well, O my Lord (foraſmuch as I am able to vnderſtand) that I doe not lye. And I am fearing, and that with very much reaſon, that, perhaps, thou maiſt yet, leaue me once againe; for I am not now to be told, how ſhort a way, mine owne ſtrength, is able to carrie, and conduct me; and how little vertue I haue, in caſe thou be not euer, at hand, to allow me thy benedictions, and ſuccours; to the end, that ſo, I may neuer forſake thee; yea, and I beſeech thy Diuine Maieſtie, that euen now, I be not already forſaken by thee, whilſt yet I am thinking thus, of my ſelf.

For my part, I know not, how wee can deſire to liue, ſince all things are ſo vncertaine heer. It ſeemed to me, O my Lord, to be already euen an impoſſible thing, that I ſhould, ſo entirely, forſake thee; but ſince I haue forſaken thee ſo often, I cannot but feare the like againe; becauſe, when thou haſt retired thy ſelf, neuer ſo little, from me,

all

ll fell instantly downe to the ground. Blessed be hou for euer, O Lord; for, howsoeuer I forsooke hee, thou wouldst not yet, so entirely, forsake me; but that still, thou gauest me thy hand, that so I might be able, to rise againe; though manie times, O Lord, I would not take hold by it; nor would I vnderstand, how thou vouchsafedst to call me againe, very often; as I will now declare.

THE SEAVENTH CHAPTER.

She shovves, by vvhat degrees, and meanes, she vvent loosing the fauour, vvhich our Lord had donne her; and hovv ill, she beganne to liue. And she also declares the harme there is, in not maintaining Clausure, in the Monasteries of Religious vvomen.

I Beganne, from one pastime, to another; from one vanitie, to another; and from one occasion, to another, to cast my self deeply, into very great occasions; and to carrie my soule so disordered, vpon manie absurdities, that already, I grew euen ashamed, to approach towards God, with so particular a kind of friendship, and familiaritie, as frequent Prayer requires; and I was forwarded in that ill way, by this, That as my sinnes grew to be encreasing, the gust, which I had taken, and the regalo, which I had receaued, from the exercise of vertue, beganne to faile me. I perceaued very clearly,

clearly, O my Lord, that theſe good things are wanting to me now, becauſe I had firſt beē wanting to thee. But yet, this was, in the meane time, the moſt terrible coſening kind of wrong, which the Diuel could poſſibly put vpon me, when he made me beginne, to feare, to make Prayer; becauſe, forſooth, I ſaw my ſelf ſo deſtroyed; and, me thought, it was better for me, to proceed, as the multitude did, ſince I was amongſt the worſt of them, who are wicked; and to pray, but as much, as I was bound; and that, but vocally; and that a perſon, who deſerued to be with the Diuel, was not to vſe Mentall Prayer, and to hold ſo ſtreight commerce, with Almightie God; and that, if I did, I should but ſeeke, to deceaue the world; becauſe exteriourly, I made shew of vertue. Yet, in the meane time, vpon this reaſon, the Houſe, wherein I liued, did deſerue no blame, at all; becauſe I procured, with ſo much cunning, and craft, all that while, that they should haue me, in good opinion. Neither did I all this, of ſet purpoſe, by counterfeyting a better Soule, then I had; for, touching this point of Hypocriſie, and Vaine-glorie, I humbly thanke Almightie God, that I remember not my ſelf, to haue offended him therein, for ought I can perceaue; for, vpon the verie firſt approach of motion, to committ that kind of ſinne, I euer receaued, and felt, ſo much trouble, that the Diuel was wōt to goe away with loſſe, and I remained with gaine; and therefore, he would neuer tempt me much, in this kind;

though

nough yet perhaps, if God had permitted him to ndeauour it, as ſtrongly in this, as he did in ſome ther things, I ſhould alſo haue faine into this nne. But his Diuine Maieſtie hath been pleaſed itherto, to preſerue me heerin; for which, let him e eternally praiſed. Nay, rather it troubled me uch, that they ſhould hold me, in good opinion, onſidering, what I knew, in priuate, of my ſelf. he true reaſon, of their belieuing me, not to be wicked, proceeded from this, That they ſaw ie, being ſo young, to retire my ſelf, manie times, nd vpon ſeuerall occaſions, to Solitude; and to ray, and read much; and talke of God; That I bued to make the picture of our Bleſſed Sauiour, e ſet vp, in manie places; and to haue an Ora- orie; and to procure, to put ſuch things there, as ight cauſe deuotion; and not to ſpeake ill, of nie; and other things alſo of this nature, which arried a kind of apparance of vertue, with them; nd I knew well enough (ſo vaine I was) how to vinne eſteem, for my ſelf, by thoſe things, which he world is wont to prize.

Vpon theſe obſeruations of theirs, they allowed ne as much, yea and more, libertie, then to the nore antient Religious woemen of the Houſe; nd they were confident of me, in all things; for, s for my taking liberties to my ſelf, or to doe anie hing at all, without leaue, yea, or to ſpeake with nie bodie, in corners, or holes, or by night, me hinkes, I could neuer haue reſolued my ſelf, euen o much, as to talke of anie ſuch thing, as this, in a Mo-

Monaſterie; neither did I euer ſo; becauſe our Lord held me vp, in his hand. For it ſeemed to me, (who reflected much, and with much attention, vpon manie things) that, to put the honour of ſo manie Religious woemen, in hazard, whilſt they were good, becauſe I was wicked, had been a very vnworthie part in me; as yet perhaps I ſhould haue done, by makeing ſtrangers thinke, that they vſed alſo, to doe the like. But why doe I ſpeake of my auoyding to doe ill things, as if any thing which I did, had been well donne? Though yet, the truth be withall, that the euill which I did, was not performed by me, with ſo much reflection, and aduertence, as this, would haue required; though yet it were, with too much. For this reaſon, I am of opinion, that it brought me hurt enough, that I was in a Monaſterie, not encloſed. Which they, who were good, might well enioy, without any diſaduantage to their goodnes; becauſe they owed no more, ſince they did not promiſe Clauſure; but as for me, who am wicked, it would certainly haue carried me downe to Hell; vnleſſe our Lord had drawne me, out of this danger, by very manie remedies, and meanes, and moſt particular fauours. And ſo, me thinkes, a Monaſterie of woemen, with libertie, expoſes them, to very great hazard; and rather appeares in mine eye, as a way, whereby they, who haue a minde to be wicked, may walke on, towards Hell, then as a remedie for their weaknes. I meane not this, by my Monaſterie; for therein, are ſo manie, who

ſerue

ſerue our Lord, ſo much in earneſt, and with ſo great perfection, that his Diuine Maieſtie, through his goodnes, cannot faile, of doing them fauour. Neither is this Monaſterie alſo, of the moſt open, and dis-encloſed; and beſides, all good Religious Order, is obſerued in it; but I ſpeake, what I was ſpeaking, of others, which I know, and haue ſeen. I ſay therefore, that thoſe others, giue me cauſe, to haue great compaſſion of them; for they haue need of particular motions, and calls, from our Lord; and not once, but very often; that ſo, they may be ſaued; conſidering, how much the honours, and recreations of the world, are now growne to be authorized; and how little, ſuch, as they are, vnderſtād the verie much, to which they are obliged. So that I beſeech God, they hold not that, ſometimes, for vertue, which is ſinne; as my ſelf did often; yea, and there is ſo great difficultie, in making this, be well vnderſtood, that there is need of no leſſe, then that our Bleſſed Lord himſelf, ſhould ſeriouſly, put his hand to the worke.

If Fathers would take my counſel (ſince they will not procure, to put their Daughters, where they may walke in the way of ſaluation, but rather be in more danger, then they ſhould, perchaps, haue mett with, in the world) I would aduiſe them, at leaſt, to conſider their owne honour; and rather to marrie them very meanly, then to put them into ſuch Monaſteries, as thoſe, vnleſſe they be very vertuouſly inclined; yea, and I pray God, that euen this, may ſerue the turne. Yea, or els, let them

them rather continue them, in their owne houſes; for if they will needs be wicked, it cannot be there, kept priuate, but for a very ſhort time; but heer, it may be long concealed, though yet, in the end, our Lord is euer wont, to diſcouer it; and then, they doe not only hurt themſelues, but alſo the reſt; and ſometimes, thoſe poore Creatures haue the leſſe fault, becauſe they doe but that, which they find in vſe. But ſtill, it is matter of much compaſſion, to ſee manie, who haue really a minde, to forſake all, and conceaue, that they goe to ſerue our Lord, and to flye from the dangers of this world, doe yet, by this meanes, grow, to embarke themſelues, in ten worlds, all, togeather; where they know not, what to doe, or how to helpe themſelues. For, youth, and ſenſualitie, and, in fine, the Diuel, both inuites them, and inclines them, to follow ſome things, which doe altogeather belong to a world; and ſo, in effect, they come to hold them good. Me thinkes, in this, they are like thoſe miſerable, and wretched men, the Hereticks; who firſt make themſelues blind, and then giue themſelues to vnderſtand, that thoſe opinions, which they follow, are good, and ſo they come to belieue them, to be true; though yet, indeed, and vpon the matter, they belieue them not; for, in their harts, there is ſomewhat, which tells them ſtill, that it is naught.

O great miſerie! I ſay, O extreame great miſerie of Religious perſons, (and I ſpeake not heer of women now, more then of men) where Religious Obſer-

Obſeruance, is not kept; and where, in one, and he ſelf ſame Monaſterie, two wayes are held: One of Vertue, and Religious Life; and another, which is vtterly in want therof; and where they all, goe, as it were, equally, hand in hand. Or rather, I ſayd all, when I ſayd, equally; for it vſes to happen ſo, for our Sinnes, that the more imperfect, make vp the greater number; and ſo, as they vſe to be more, they vſe to be alſo more fauoured. And true Religious Obſeruance is wont to be ſo rare, in thoſe places, that as well that Religious man, as that Religious woeman, who ſhall haue a minde, to giue themſelues wholy, and in good earneſt, to follow their Vocation, and Rule, will haue cauſe, to be in more feare of the reſt of the Religious of their owne Houſe, then of all the Diuels in Hell. Yea, and they will need to vſe more caution, and diſſimulation, in ſpeaking of that entercourſe, and friendſhip, which ſuch perſons ſhould procure to hold, with Almightie God, then of other inclinations, and friendſhips, which the Diuel findes meanes, ſometimes, to bring into Monaſteries. I can therefore meet with no reaſon, why we ſhould be amazed, to ſee ſo manie miſeries in the Church, ſince they, who ought to be Patterns for others, (that ſo, all men might grow to be vertuous, by their example) haue totally blotted out, that Worke, which the Spirit of the Saints, in old time, left regiſtred in our Religious Orders. And I humbly beſeech his Diuine Maieſtie, that he will be pleaſed, to giue ſuch remedie, to theſe

miſchiefs, as he knowes beſt, to be needful
Amen.

Bnt, in the meane time, when I beganne to vſ
ſuch conuerſations as theſe, I little thought, that ſ
great diſtractions, and other dammages, woul
grow to my Soule, by that kind of proceeding
when I ſaw, they were ſo much vſed by others
and I conceaued, that ſo generall a thing, as it is
for Secular people, to make Viſits to the Religious
in manie Monaſteries, would be of no greate
preiudice to me, then it was to others, whome
ſaw, to be vertuous, and good. But I conſidered
not, the while, that thoſe others, were much more
vertuous, then my ſelf; and that thoſe things,
which were of much danger to me, were not, per-
haps, of ſo very much, to them; though yet, I feare,
it be of ſome; and, at the beſt hand, I am ſure
enough, that it is no better, then time very ill em-
ployed, and ſpent. And, being once with a certaine
perſon, our Lord was pleaſed to giue me to vn-
derſtand, in the verie beginning of my acquain-
tance with her, that ſuch friendſhips would be, no
way, conuenient for me; and to giue me alſo ad-
uiſe, and light, in ſo great a darknes, as that was.
For, Chriſt our Lord repreſented himſelf before
me, with much rigour, and gaue me well to vn-
derſtand, how greatly he was diſguſted at my
proceeding. I ſaw him only, with the eyes of my
Soule; but yet, much more diſtinctly, and more
clearly, then I could poſſibly haue donne, with the
eyes of my Bodie; and he remained ſo deeply
imprin-

imprinted there, that although it hapned to me, boue six and twentie yeares agoe, me thinkes, he is still as present to me now, as he was then; But am sure, I remained so altered, yea and so astonished, that I intended to see that person no more.

It did me a great deale of hurt, that I knew not, at that time, that it was possible for one to see anie thing, but with the eyes of the Bodie; and the Diuel was carefull enough, to continue me, in that erroneous opinion, and to make me still belieue, that it was impossible; and therefore, that I had but fancied certaine things, to my self; and that, perhaps, it might be a worke of the Diuel. And he brought manie suggestions, like this, vpon me; though yet still, I were very confidently of opinion, that it was God, and no conceipt, or fancie, at all; but yet still, becaufe it induced me to doe things, which were against my gust, I did the best could, euen to belye my verie self. And forasmuch, as I durst not conferr with anie bodie, about this particular, and found my self also extreamly importuned afterward, and was wished to be assured, that it could not be ill donne, to see such a person as that, and that there would be no loss of honour by it, but rather gaine, I returned to enioy the same conuersation; yea, and also, at other times, I conuersed, in like manner, with others; for they were manie yeares, wherein I tooke this pestilentiall recreation; and when once, I was farre embarked therin, it seemed not to me, to be so very ill, as yet, indeed, it was; though still, it be

very true, that ſometimes I diſcerned clearly enough, that it was not good. But yet, no other conuerſation diſtracted me ſo much, as this, in particular, did; by reaſon of the great affection, which I bore to the partie.

But, my ſelfe being afterwards againe, with the ſame perſon, we, both of vs, ſaw coming towards vs (and there were others alſo preſent, who ſaw it too) a certaine thing, which had the manner of a great Toade; and it preſſed, and paſſed on, with very much more ſpeed, then ſuch creatures vſe to haue. For my part, I was not able to conceaue; how ſuch a filthie Beaſt as that, ſhould get into that roome, through that part, from whence it came; and euen, as it were, at Noone day; nor had euer anie ſuch thing, been ſeen there. The effect, which it wrought with me, ſeemes, not to haue been void, of ſome myſterie; and this alſo, was a thing, which I could neuer forget. But, O greatnes of Almightie God! with how much care, & pittie, wert thou admoniſhing me, in ſo manie kindes, and by ſo manie wayes; & how little did I permitt, that all theſe warnings ſhould help?

There was alſo there, at that time, a certaine Religious woeman of my kindred; and she was antient, and a great ſeruant of God, and of much diſcipline in her Religious Order. She alſo, would ſometimes, be giuing me good counſel; but I did not only not belieue her, but was alſo diſguſted with her; as conceauing, that ſhe would needs

needs take ſcandall at me, without cauſe.

And this I heer relate, to the end, that both my vickednes, and the great goodnes of Almightie God, may be the better vnderſtood; and that it may be knowne, how well I deſerued Hell, for my great ingratitude; and I doe it alſo, to this end, that if our Lord may ſo ordaine, & be pleaſed, that anie Religious vvoemen may fall vpon reading this Diſcourſe, they may be brought to be carefull, to take vvarning by me; and I begg of them, that, for the loue of our Lord, they vvil take heed of ſuch recreations, as theſe. And I beſeech his Diuine Maieſtie, that ſome one of them, may be diſ-abuſed, vvhome I haue deceaued, vvhen I told them, that it vvas not ill; and vvhen (being in ſuch blindnes, at that time) I procured, to aſſure them, that there vvas no danger at all; and in regard alſo, that, by the ill example, vvhich I gaue gaue them, (as I haue related heer) I was a cauſe to them, of great miſchief, vvhilſt yet I thought not, that I did ſo much hurt; and though alſo, it be certaine, that I had no deſigne at all, to deceaue them.

But now, euen vvhilſt I vvas yet much indiſpoſed, in the vvay of health, both concerning Bodie, and Minde; and ſo, before I vvas able to help my ſelf, in either kinde, I grew into an extreame deſire, to doe others good; vvhich is a very ordinarie temptation, for new beginners; though yet, it hapned now to ſucceed vvell, vvith me. And conſidering, how dearly I loued my Father, I vviſhed him the ſelf ſame benefit, vvich I con-

ceaued my ſelf to haue gotten, and gained, by meanes of Mentall Prayer; and eſteeming, that, in this life, there vvas no greater bleſſing, then to obtaine, and enioy that guift, I beganne, by certaine vvayes of diſcourſe, to procure, the beſt I could, that he vvould endeauour to obtaine it; and I gaue him certaine Bookes, for this purpoſe. Now, he, being a man of ſo much vertue, as I haue already declared, grew to ſettle himſelf, ſo very well, in this exerciſe, that he came, vvithin fiue or ſix yeares, (for ſo long, I thinke, it vvas) to be ſo vvell improued, and aduanced therein, that I bleſſed our Lord much, for the fauour; and it gaue me an extreame conſolation. The troubles, and croſſes, vvhich he endured, vvére very great, and of manie kindes; and he paſſed through them all, vvith much conformitie, to the vvill of our Lord. He came to ſee me often; and vvas greatly comforted, to treat of Spirituall things. And vvhen now I liued ſo diſtracted, and diffuſed, vvithout vſing Mentall Prayer, and ſaw vvithall, that he conceaued me, to be ſtill the verie ſame, that I had been before, I vvas not able to endure, to liue, vvithout vn-deceauing him; for I had, then, been a yeare, and more, vvithout Mental Prayer, as thinking it more humilitie for me, to abſtaine; and this (as I ſhall declare afterwards) vvas the greateſt, and vvorſt temptation, that euer I had; for, by this meanes, I ranne headlong, vpon my totall ruine; vvhereas, vvhen I frequented Prayer, if I offended God, one day, I returned to recollect my

y ſelf, vpon another; and ſo, to abſent my ſelf om the occaſion.

But that bleſſed man, my Father, coming to ſee ie, in ſuch ſtate as this, it vvas too much for me as I vvas ſaying) to let him vvalke on, ſo farre in rrour, as to thinke, that I ſtill conuerſed vvith od, in Prayer, as formerly I had donne; and ſo I old him then, that I did no longer vſe Mentall rayer; though yet, I did not tell him, the cauſe erof; but I alleadged my infirmities, for the eaſon; and that, although I vvere recouered of the ayne ſicknes, I had yet diſeaſes, yea and very reat ones, ſtill; and that, although, of late, they had ot aſſaulted me, vvith ſo very great fiercenes, as efore, yet they failed not, ſtill to continue, and to xerciſe me alſo, in manie kindes. In particular, that had certaine vomits, for twētie yeares togeather, uerie morning, in ſuch ſort, as that I could neuer reake my faſt, till Noone, vvas paſt; yea and ſo-metimes, not ſo ſoone. And ſince, of late, I am rowne able to receaue the B. Sacrament more ften, it proceeds from this, that theſe vomits ome to me, at night, before I goe to bed, and hey put me to much more paine; and then, I muſt rocure to haſten, and facilitate them, by the vſe f feathers, and ſuch other things; becauſe, if I haue ot thoſe vomits, the ſicknes, vvhich I feele, is ex-reame. But indeed, I am, me thinkes, almoſt neuer, vithout manie kindes of paine; and ſometimes, hey are very ſharp ones, and eſpecially, at my erie hart; though yet withall, it be alſo true, that

the cruel Palſie, and other infirmityes of Feauers which were wont to come very thick vpon me are now found, to oppreſs me more ſeldome; ſo that manie times, I am well, in thoſe reſpects; and I haue made ſo little account of theſe miſeries, for theſe eight yeares togeather, that ſometimes I am euen glad, I haue them; as conceauing, that our Lord may be, peraduenture, ſerued, in ſome ſort thereby. This was my diſcourſe. And now, my Father belieued, that this, which I told him heer was, indeed, the true cauſe of my omiſſion, for, himſelf neuer vſed to lye; and conſidering in what ſort, and, of what matter, I was then diſcourſing to him, he had no reaſon to thinke, but that I ſayd true; and, to the end, that he might belieue me the better, I told him alſo then, that I well ſaw my ſelf, not to be without ſome fault; and that I had enough to doe, to be able to aſſiſt in the Quire; though yet, in verie deed, euen this reaſon of corporall ſicknes, was no ſufficient cauſe, to make me giue anie good thing ouer; for, there is no need of corporall ſtrength, for ſuch things as theſe, but only of loue, and cuſtome; ſince our Lord, affords vs alwaies opportunitie, if we will, ourſelues. I ſay, alwaies; becauſe, though infirmities, and other occaſions, my hinder one ſometimes, from ſpending manie howers in Solitude, yet there will not want ſome other time, wherein we may haue health enough, for this buſines; yea and euen in other occaſions, as alſo in the midſt of ſicknes it ſelf, the trueſt Prayer may be made

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(since it is the Soule, which loues) by offering vp that paine, to Almightie God; and in remembring, for whome it is endured; and in conforming ones self, to God's holie will, therein; and in a thousand such other things, as will occurr. And thus may one exercise Loue; for, there is no necessitie at all, for a person, either to be in Solitude, or els, that there must be no Mentall Prayer, at all.

If we will take a little care, we may arriue to obtaine great blessings, at those times, when our Lord, euen takes time for Prayer from vs, by meanes of our sicknesses, and paine; and my self had found this to be true, as long as my Conscience was pure, and good. But my Father, through the opinion, which he held of me, and the loue he bore me, belieued all, that I had sayd; or rather, he not only belieued, but had also pittie of me; though yet, being then growne, to find himself, in so eminent, and high a state of Spirituall Life, he remained not with me, very long. And therefore, hauing visited me, he returned home, as holding his stay, there, to be losse of time; and I, who was willing to spend it vpon other vanities, was not troubled very much, at his departure.

It was not only with him, but with other persons also, whome I procured, that they should addict themselues to Mentall Prayer, euen whilst I was walking on, in those vanities; for still, as I found them apt, to vse Vocall Prayer, I told them how they should grow to haue the vse of Meditation; and I did them good, and gaue them

Bookes; for I had ſtill a good deſire, that others ſhould ſerue Almightie God, euen from the verie firſt time, that I vſed Mentall Prayer; as I haue related heer.

It ſeemed to me, that, ſince now I ſerued not our Lord my ſelf, ſo well as I ſhould, yet I liked not, that that light ſhould be loſt, which his Diuine Maieſtie had beſtowed vpon me; but that others might alſo ſerue him, by my meanes. And this I heer recount, that ſo, the great blindnes wherein I was, may be the better ſeen; which induced me, to make me looſe my ſelf, whilſt yet I went procuring, to doe good to others.

About this time, my Father fell into the ſicknes, whereof he dyed, ſhortly after. But I went to attend, and recouer him, whilſt my ſelf was more ſick in Soule, then he was in Bodie, through manie vanities of mine; though yet, not in ſuch ſort, as that, according to my vnderſtanding, I was in Mortall Sinne, euen in all this worſt, & wickedeſt time, whereof I ſpeake; for certainly, if I had conceaued otherwiſe, I ſhould, by no meanes, haue continued therin. I endured ſome affliction, and trouble, in his ſicknes; and, I thinke, I alſo made him ſome part of poore amends, for the paines, which he had taken with me, in mine; for now, being ill enough in my ſelf, I yet ſtrained very hard, to doe him ſeruice; and beſides, I well conſidered, that by the onlie loſſe of him, all my comfort, and regalo, was to be loſt; for it all, was ſhut vp, in onlie him. I animated my ſelf alſo, ſo much,

towards

owards the not ſhewing him, that I was in anie aine, and in continuing ſo, euen till he expired, as I had felt no trouble at all; though yet it be very ue, that, when I ſaw him come, to be vpon the erie point, to looſe his life, it ſeemed to me, as if ine owne verie Soule, had then been torne out f my Bodie; for I loued him much.

It was a thing to make our Lord be highly raiſed, to ſee the death, which my Father dyed; ogeather with the deſire, which he alſo had to lye; and the counſel, which he gaue vs, after he ad receaued extreame Vnction; and how he harged vs, to recommend him to God; and that ve ſhould begg mercie of him, for his Soule; and hat we muſt ſerue him euer; and conſider, that ll this world, muſt come to end. With teares he alſo told vs, how ſad he was at the hart, for not auing ſerued his Diuine Maieſtie better; That e wiſhed, he were ſome Religious man; I meane, hat he had been ſo; and that, of the moſt ſtrict, who were in the world. And I hold it, for very certaine, that ſome fifteen dayes before, our Lord gaue him to vnderſtand, that he was not to liue; becauſe, before that verie time, he did not thinke he was ſick, though yet he were ſo, in good earneſt. But afterwards, though he ſeemed to mend much, in point of health, and though the Doctours bad him belieue, that there was no danger at all, yet he made no account of that, but only attéded, to put his Soule, in good order.

That ſicknes of his, beganne with a very grieuous

grieuous paine, round about his ſhoulders, which neuer left him; and ſometimes it preſſed him ſo hard, that his affliction was very great. I told him once, vpon this occaſion, that ſince he had been ſo deuoted to that Myſterie, when our Lord carried his Croſſe vpon his Back, he might doe well, to conceaue, that his Diuine Maieſtie had been pleaſed to giue him a feeling, of ſome part of that, which himſelf had vndergone, with ſo much trouble; and my Father was ſo comforted by this thought, that I remember him not, to haue euer complained more. He remained three dayes, with very little ſhew of vnderſtanding; but yet, the day, whereon he dyed, our Lord reſtored it to him; & that, ſo entirely, as we were all, euen amazed to ſee it; and he continued in it, ſaying the Creed; and as ſoone, as he had paſſed through the firſt part thereof, he expired. When he was dead, he looked euen like an Angell; and as ſuch (in manner of ſpeach) he euer ſeemed, in my ſight, to be, both in Soule, and diſpoſition or humour; which he had, extreamly good. Nor doe I know, why I haue ſpoken thus much of him, vnleſſe it be to confeſſe, and accuſe mine owne wickednes, ſo much the more; ſince, vpon the ſight of ſuch a death, and the knowledge of ſuch a life, I ought to haue amended, and reformed mine, if it had been but to grow the liker to ſuch a Father. His Confeſſarius, who was a Dominican, and a great learned man, affirmed, that he made no doubt, but that my Father would goe ſtreight to Heauen; for he,

who

who had Confeſſed him diuers yeares, ſpake much of the great puritie of his Conſcience. This Dominican Father, being a very worthie man, and a true ſeruant of God, did me a great deale of good; for I Confeſſed my ſelf to him; and he vndertooke the profit of my Soule, with care; and to make me well vnderſtand the way of perdition, wherein I was walking. He cauſed me alſo to Communicate euerie fifteen dayes; and beginning firſt to treate with him, by little and little, I ſpoke with him afterward, at length, about my Prayer; and he told me, that I muſt not faile to vſe it; and that it could not, by anie meanes, but doe me good. I beganne, therefore, to vſe it againe; and from that time forward, I neuer left it; though yet I did not, for the preſent, giue-ouer the occaſions, of my imperfections.

I therefore, in the meane time, paſſed a moſt ſad life; for, in Prayer, I came to vnderſtand my faults. On the one ſide, I was called by Almightie God; and on the other, I followed the world. All thoſe things, which belonged to God, gaue me great contentment; but thoſe things, which were of the World, tyed me vp, in chaines; and, it ſeemes, I had a minde, to make theſe two contraryes, friends, which yet are ſo much in enmitie, with one another; namely, a Spirituall life, on the one ſide; and ſenſuall paſtimes, contentments, and delights, on the other.

In my Prayer, I endured much trouble, becauſe now, my Spirit was growne to be no longer, a Lord,

Lord,but a Slaue; and therefore I was not able to shut my self vp, in my hart (which was the onlie way of proceeding,I formerly had held,in my vse of Prayer) without shutting vp, a thousand vanities, togeather with my self. I passed so manie yeares in this manner, that now I am astonished to consider, that anie person should be able to endure, the not leauing, either the one, or the other, in so long a time.I well know, that now, it was no longer, in my hand, to giue ouer Mentall Prayer; for he held me now in his, who resolued to doe me greater fauours. O that I could declare the occasions of doing ill, which God remoued from me,in those yeares; and how I put my self againe, into them; and of the danger, wherin I was,to loose all the opinion,and reputation,which I had in the world, from which he freed me; and of the hast, which I made, to discouer, by my actions, what kinde of Creature I was; and the hast, which our Lord made also, to couer these faults, and to discouer some little vertue of mine, if there were anie; and to make the same seem great,in the eyes of all men; in such sort, as that they euer held me,in much account. For,though sometimes, my vanities would shine through my actions,yet they seeing other things in me,which appeared good, would not belieue the ill. But the true cause heerof, was, that the knower of all things saw,that this was fitt, to be so ordained; to the end, that,when afterward I should come, to perswade the world, to doe him seruice, they might

night giue me some little credit, therin. And that soueraigne Bountie of God, did not so much consider my great sinnes, as it did those desires, which I had sometimes, to serue him; and the great trouble I felt in my self, for wanting power, and strength, to put the same in execution.

But, O thou Lord of my Soule! and how shall I euer be able to expresse, with fulnes, and clearnes enough, the fauours, which thou shewedst me, in those yeares? and how, in that verie time, when I was offending thee most, thou madest such hast to dispose my Soule, to a most profound remorse, and sorrow; that so I might come to tast of thy regalo's, and great fauours againe? The truth is, O my King, that thou didst vse the most curious, and choice kinde of sharp punishment, which could possibly (to my thinking) be found for me; as one, who didst well vnderstand, what was likelie to cost me, the deareſt of all other things; for thou didst punish those sinnes of mine, with great regalo's. And I thinke, it is no impertinencie, which I vtter; though yet it were a kind of reason, that I should now, euen as it were, loose my witts, whilst I renew the memorie of my ingratitude, and malice, towards thee. But really, it was so much a more painefull, and insupportable kinde of thing, for me to receaue such fauours, vpon the verie neck of my hauing falne into so great offences, then it would haue been, to endure grieuous punishments; that some one of those layd fauours, so receaued, seemes clearly, and very cer-

certainly, to haue euen ouer-wrought, and defeated, and confounded me more, then all my infirmities, and torments, and other afflictions, put togeather, vvere euer able to doe. For, as for theſe latter afflictions, I found, that I deſerued them vvell; and I thought they might goe, in part, by vvay of ſatisfaction, for my ſinnes; though yet, euen in that kinde of account, I know, that my ſufferances vvere few, for my offences; vvhich vvere ſo manie, and ſo very great. But now, to ſee my ſelf receauing ſo freshly, ſo high fauours, vvhilſt yet the vvhile, I made ſo ill retribution, for thoſe, vvhich I had receaued before, is, in my account, a kinde of moſt terrible torment; and I thinke, it vvill be eſteemed ſo, by all ſuch, as haue anie knowledge, or loue of God; and vve may eaſily finde this to be true, euen by the naturall condition of perſons, vvho are vertuouſly inclined. And hence flowed downe my teares, togeather vvith an indignation, to conſider, vvhat I found in my ſelf; for I ſaw, that ſtill I vvas, as vpon the pitch of returning to fall againe, although my firme purpoſes, and deſires, did then (I meane, ſo long as thoſe fauours laſted) ſtand faſt, and firme.

A great incõuenience it is, for a Soule, to find her ſelf ſolitarie, and ſingle, amongſt ſo manie dangers; and me thinkes, that if I had anie Creature, to vvhome I might haue imparted all this, it would haue holp me, not to fall againe; at leaſt, for ſhame of the world, if I would not be aſhamed, to offend God. I would therefore aduiſe

*aduiſe them, who make Mentall Prayer, and especially at the beginning thereof, to procure some friendſhip, and familiaritie, with others, who haue the ſame deſigne; for, this is of much importance, though it ſhould be for no more, then to be aiſiſted by the prayers of one another; and how much more, when there is ſuch aduantage to be gotten alſo, otherwiſe. And, for my part, I cannot tell, why, ſince by meanes of conuerſations, and humane inclinations (euen although they be not excellently good) men procure to get ſome friends, by whoſe meanes they may vnwearie themſelues, and may find an encreaſe of contentment, by recounting their vaine pleaſures to one another, it ſhould be ſo much, as permitted, that ſuch as beginne to loue, and ſerue Almightie God, in good earneſt, ſhould forbeare to impart, both their delights, and their afflictions, to ſome fitt perſons; ſince, ſuch as vſe Prayer, are acquainted with both. For, if that Creature be in earneſt, who deſires to hold friēdſhip, with his Diuine Maieſtie, there needs to be no feare of Vaine-Glorie; and when that Soule ſhould be ſet vpon, by anie firſt motion therof, he would eaſily get out of it, with merit. And, as for me, I belieue, that he, who ſhould communicate therof, with others, to this intention, would both profit himſelf, and thoſe, that heare him; and would proue, to be better taught, both in his owne vnderſtanding part, and in knowing alſo, how to inſtruct his friends. He, who should be ſubiect to Vaine-Glorie, for

* *An excellent Aduiſe.*

ſpeaking vpon ſuch an occaſion as this, would alſo not faile to haue it, by being ſeen to heare Maſſe, with deuotion; and by doing other things alſo, to which he is yet expreſly bound, vpon the paine of being, otherwiſe, no good Chriſtian. And yet theſe things, muſt not be forborne, vpon the feare of a man's being ſubiect to Vaine-Glorie. Now, this is a point of ſo extreame importance, for the benefit of all ſuch Soules, as are not yet ſtrengthned, and eſtabliſhed in Vertue (who want not, both ſo manie Aduerſaries, yea and friends alſo, to incite them to ill) that I know not, how to expreſſe it, with earneſtnes, and aduantage enough. And, to me it ſeemes, as if the Diuel loued to vſe this deuiſe, as a thing, which imports him very much; Namely, that men should hide themſelues as carefully, from ſuch, as can vnderſtand them, & who would procure, to make them loue, and giue guſt to God; as he hath earneſtly incited others, to diſcouer their intemperate deſires. Which latter courſe, is yet ſo much taken, and followed, that it paſſes for a kinde of gallanterie, to talke of it; and ſo, vpon the matter, they publish the offences, which they committ againſt Almightie God, by this meanes.

I know not, whether they be impertinencies, which I vtter; if they be, your Reuerence may be pleaſed, to teare them; and if they be not, I beſeech you, Sir, aſſiſt, and inſtruct my ſimplicitie, by adding much to them, vpon this ſubiect. For, the buſines of the Seruice of Almightie God, goes

now

now ſo weakly on, that they, who procure to ſerue him, had need ſupport, and ſuccour one another; that ſo, they may be able to get forward; ſo very much are the vanities, and foolish entertainments of the world, growne, to be in fashion; and in ſuch ſort, that there are few eyes in the world, to diſcerne their fault. But if anie bodie, on the other ſide, doe but beginne, to giue himſelf to Almightie God, there are ſo manie, who will murmure at him, that he shall finde himſelf to haue need enough, to get companie, which may appeare, in his defence; till ſuch time, as he be confirmed, in not being troubled, for what he is put to ſuffer; which if he chance not to be, he may, perhaps, grow to ſee himſelf, in ſome ſtraights.

And, perhaps, this may haue been the reaſon, why ſome Saints haue vſed, to retire themſelues into Deſerts. But, as it is a kinde of humilitie, not to put anie confidence, in a man's ſelf; ſo yet, is it no ſinne againſt pietie, to belieue, that God will not faile, to help him to liue amongſt them, with whome he is obliged, to conuerſe. But thus, Charitie, by being communicated, will grow to be encreaſed; and there are a thouſand other benefits, which belong to this way of proceeding; whereof I should not aduenture to ſpeake, if I had not great experience of the much importance heerof. True it is, that I am both the moſt weake, and the moſt wicked, of as manie Creatures, as were euer borne; but yet ſtill, I am apt to thinke, that, whoſoeuer will humble himſelf, though he

be ſtrong, and will yet, not belieue ſo much of himſelf, but, in this, will giue belief to another, who is endued with experience, ſhall neuer looſe anie thing, by the bargaine. Of my ſelf, I am able to ſay thus much, that if our Lord had not diſcouered this truth to me, and had not alſo giuen me meanes, to treate, in very vſuall manner, with ſuch perſons, as had the knowledge, and practiſe of Mentall Prayer, I had ſtill walked on, with falling and riſing, till I had euen dropped downe headlong into Hell. For, I wanted not manie friends, who would not faile, to help me to fall; but towards the recouering, and raiſing me vp, I found my ſelf ſo abſolutly alone, that now I am no leſſe then amazed, to conſider, how I remained not ſtill, laid flatt; and I praiſe the mercie of Almightie God; for it was he, and only he, who gaue me his helping hand. Let him be bleſſed, and praiſed, for euer, and for euer, Amen.

THE

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

She treats of the great good, it did her, towards the not loosing her Soule, not to haue wholy giuen-ouer her Prayer; As also, what an excellent remedie that is, towards the gaining of whatsoeuer good thing, which is lost. She perswades all Creatures to vse it; and declares the great benefits therof; and although we should afterward leaue it, yet, that still, it would proue a great good, to haue vsed so great a help for some time.

I Haue not, without cause, been considering, and reflecting vpon this life of mine, so long. For, I am able to discerne well enough, that no bodie will haue gust, to looke vpon a thing, so very wicked; And really, I would be glad, that all such persons as should reade this Discourse, might abhorre me; to see a Soule, so pertinacious, and so vngratefull, towards him, who had vouchsafed it so great Fauours. And I wish, I could get leaue, to declare that multitude of times, that I failed of my obligation to Almightie God, in this number of yeares; by reason, that I was not applyed to, and supported by, the strong pillar of Prayer. I passed through this tempestuous Sea, almost twentie

yeares, betweene these fallings, and risings (though I rose il-fauourdly enough, since I returned againe so quickly to fall) in this kind of life, tending towards perfection; but yet in so base a way, as that I made no account at all, of Veniall * Sinnes; and for such as were Mortall, it is true, that, although I feared them, yet I did not euen that, as I ought since I absented not my self from the danger therof; but I will be bold to say, that it is one of the most painefull kindes of life, that can possibly be imagined. For, I neither enioyed the sweetnes of God, nor yet the satisfaction of the world. When I found my self in the contentments of the world, the remembrance of what I owed to God, gaue me paine; and whilst I was conuersing with his Diuine Maiestie, the inclinations, & affections of the world, gaue me disquiet. And this is a kinde of warre so very painefull, that I know not, how it was possible for me, to finde meanes, to endure it, for one moneth; and much more, how I could doe it, for so manie yeares; notwithstanding that I yet clearly see, the great mercie, which Almightie God shewed me heerin (since I was to treat of manie things, in the world) that still I should haue the courage, to giue my self to Prayer. I say, courage; for, as for me, I see not, what one thing there is, of so manie, as are to be found in the whole world, wherein there is need of a greater, then to treat of committing Treasons, against a King, and to know, that he knowes it well, and yet, neuer to goe out of his presence. For, howsoeuer it

* *Take heed of this great danger.*

t be very true, that we are alwaies in the presence of Almightie God; yet me thinkes, that they, who conuerse with him, in Prayer, are in his presence, after a more particular manner; for they are seeing then, that he sees them; whereas others may perhaps, remaine some dayes in his presence, and yet without remembring, that he lookes vpon them. True it is, that within that time, there were, I beeiue, manie moneths, and sometimes, peraduenture, a whole yeare, that I kept my self from offending our Lord, and gaue my self much, to Mentall Prayer; and I also vsed some, yea and manie diligences, that I might neuer grow more, to offend him. And because all that, which I write now, is to be deliuered, with entirenes of truth, I declare my self heer, as you see. But I remember little, of those good dayes; and therefore it may be thought, they were few, and the ill ones, manie; yet few of those few, passed away, without my allowing a good long time for Prayer, vnlesse I were either very sick, or extreamly busie. The worse I was in my health, the more I was vnited with God; and I procured, that such persons, as vsed to be with me, at those times, might be so too; and I begged it of our Lord; and we spake very often, of him. And so, vnless it were that one yeare of which I haue spokē, in eight and twentie yeares, which haue passed, since I beganne first to vse Mentall Prayer, I haue endured this battaile, and strife, of treating, both with God, and the World, more then eighteen yeares. In those other

yeares, whereof I am yet to ſpeake, the cauſe of the warre was changed, though of it ſelf, it was no inconſiderable thing; but, in regard that I was then, as I conceaue, in the ſeruice of Almightie God, and in a knowledge of the vanitie of whatſoeuer this world can be, it did all, proue delightfull, and pleaſant; as I will ſhew heerafter.

Now, the reaſon, why I haue related all this, is; Firſt, (as I was ſaying before) to the end, that the mercie of Almightie God, together with my ingratitude, may be well diſcerned; And Secondly, that it may be alſo vnderſtood, how great a bleſſing Almightie God doth to that Soule, which he diſpoſes to vſe Mentall Prayer, with a good affection, and will; though yet it ſhould not be ſo very well diſpoſed for it, as were fitt; for, in fine, if he perſeuer therein, what Sinne ſoeuer he committ, and whatſoeuer Temptation be offered, and whatſoeuer Falls be giuē him, in a thouſand ſtrāge faſhions, by the Diuel*, I hold, in fine, for certaine, that our Lord will draw him, at length, out of the Storme, into the Port of Saluation; as now, by all apparance, he hath drawne me; and I humbly beſeech his Diuine Maieſtie, that I may neuer returne againe, to be loſt.

Conſider this point much, and often.

Manie holie, and good men, haue written of the benefit, which he obtaines, who exerciſes himſelf in Prayer; I meane, Mental Prayer; and glorie be to Almightie God, for being the cauſe thereof; and yet, if that were not true, though I haue little humilitie, yet am I not withall, ſo inſolent,

folent, as that I would presume to speake vpon this subiect. But of that, whereof I haue some experience, I may yet presume to say somewhat; and it is this; That, whosoeuer hath begunne to frequent the vse of Prayer, I wish him, not to giue it ouer, whatsoeuer sinnes he committ in the meane time; since this is the meanes, by which he may recouer himself againe; which he will find to be of much more difficultie, without it. And let not the Diuel tempt him to leaue it, as he did me, vpon a pretence of humilitie; but let him firmly beleeue, that his words can neuer want truth, who sayd, That, if we will repent our selues in good earnest, and resolue to offend the Diuine Maiestie no more, he restores vs to the same friendship, which we had before, with him; and doth vs the same fauours, vvhich he did vs before; and sometimes, they proue to be much greater, if the repentance deserue it. And, vvhosoeuer hath not yet begunne this exercise, I beseech him, for the loue of our Lord, that he vvill no longer depriue himself, of so great a benefit.

There is nothing, to be feared heer; but much, to be desired. For, though a man should not proceed so farr, as to striue to gaine such perfection, as may prepare, and, as it vvere, deserue those gusts, and regalo's, vvhich God is vvont to giue to such persons; yet the least, vvhich he shall get, vvill be, that he shall be going on, in the vvay to Heauen. And I know so much, of the mercie of Almightie God, that I may conclude for certaine enough,

that no bodie euer tooke him for a friend, whome he did not well requite, for his paines. For, Mentall Prayer, is no other thing, in my opinion, then a Treatie, about making Friendſhip with Almightie God; and a frequēt, and priuate Commerce, hand to hand, with him; by whome, we know, we are beloued. And, as for you, if you loue him not yet, (for, to the end, that it may be a true loue, and that your friendſhip may laſt, the conditions muſt be reciprocall; and we know, there can be no want on our Lord's behalf; and that our nature, is vitious, ſenſuall, and vngratefull; and ſo, we cannot, perhaps, obtaine fully, at our owne hands, to loue him ſo much, becauſe he is not of the ſame condition, with vs) yet conſidering, how much it imports vs to hold friendſhip with him, and how much he loues vs, we muſt paſſe on, and paſſe ouer this paine, of being much in his companie, who is of ſo different a condition, from ours.

O infinite goodnes of my God! how true it is, that, me thinkes, I ſee, both thee, and my ſelf, in this verie manner? O thou, who art the verie Regalo of the Angels in Heauen! how faine would I euen defeat, and diſſolue my ſelf totally, in louing thee, when I ſee, and conſider, theſe things? And how certaine a thing it is, that thou art on the ſuffering hand, in regard of ſuch, as will not ſuffer thee, to remaine with them? O how good a friend, doſt thou make thy ſelf, to thy friend, O my Lord; and how doſt thou goe enduring him, and regaling him? And thou expecteſt, till he make him-

himself grow to be of thy condition, and inclination; and, in the meane time, thou endurest, and permittest him to continue, to be a while, of his owne; and thou takest, O my deare Lord, by way of good payment, those fitts of time, which he can be content, to bestow vpon thee; and vpon a minute of true sorrow, and repentance, thou forgettest all those sinnes, whereby he hath offended thee. All this, haue I perceaued clearly, in order to my self; and, for my part, I cannot see, O my Creatour, how the whole world, can forbeare, to procure to draw neer to thy Diuine Maiestie; that so it may be able, to obtaine this particular kind of friendship with thee. Such as are wicked, and are not, hitherto, come to haue the like inclinations, and dispositions to thine, should yet come towards thee; to the end, that so thou mightst make them good; and that they might endure thee, to be with them, though it were but for some two howers, in the day; yea, euen though they would not, the while, stay in thy companie, without a thousand distractions, and tumblings, vp, and downe, in wordlie cares, and thoughts; as I was wont to doe. And, for recompence of this violence, which they vse to make against themselues, by continuing in so good companie as thine, (for neither in those verie beginnings, no, nor euen afterwards also, for a while, can they tell, how to doe better) thou forcest, O Lord, the Diuels of Hell, to forbeare a setting fiercely vpon them; and permittest them, to haue daily, lesse power,

power, then other, againſt them; yea, and thou putteſt them into mens hands, that they may ouercome them. So that thou, O thou Life of all liues, doſt neuer kill anie one of thoſe Creatures, who puts his confidence in thee; nor of them, who deſire thee, for a Freind; but thou ſuſtaineſt both the life of their Bodies, with encreaſe of health; and thou alſo doſt impart it, to the Soule. For my part, I cannot poſſibly vnderſtand, why men ſhould feare, as they doe, to beginne to vſe Mentall Prayer; nor of what it is, in fine, that they are afrayd. The Diuel, indeed, doth not ill, in order to his owne wicked ends, to procure to doe me hurt, if, by pretence, and meanes, of I know not what feares, he can procure, to make me forbeare a conſidering, how much, and how highly, I haue offended Almightie God; and how much, I am obliged to him, for his great mercies, and benefits; and to thinke vpon this truth, that there is ſuch a thing, as glorie in Heauen; and torments, in Hell; and vpon thoſe great afflictions, and ſorrowes, which our Lord endured for me, in this life. For, this was ſtill my Prayer, when I was continuing in all thoſe dangers; and vpon this, did I thinke, whenſoeuer I was able. And, very often, yea and for ſome yeares togeather, I was buſier, about deſiring, that the Hower might come quickly to an end, ſtill liſtning when the Clock would ſtrike; then vpon better things. Yea, and it hapned to me, manie times, that I knew not, what Pennance could be ſet before me, ſo very great, as that I would

vould not more willingly vndergoe it, then re-ollect my ſelf to Mentall Prayer. And it is cer-aine, that either the Diuel, did ſet vpon me, with uch an vn-reſiſtable force; or els, mine owne vicked cuſtome did it, that I might not goe nake Mentall Prayer; and the ſadnes of my hart, vas ſuch, euen vvhen I entred into my Oratorie, or that purpoſe, that I vvas faine to help, and erue my ſelf, of all the ſtrength, and courage I had, (vvhich, they ſay, is not very little; and it hath been ſeen, that God hath giuen me more, then is vſually poſſeſſed, by vvoemen, but that I haue em-bloyed it ill) to force my ſelf, to make my Prayer; and, in fine, it pleaſed our Lord, to aſſiſt me. But afterward, vvhen I had vſed theſe violences to my hart, I found my ſelf vvith more quiet, & delight; ſo that, ſometimes, I grew to haue an expreſſe deſire, to pray.

Now, therefore, ſince it chanced, that our Lord did ſuffer, and endure ſo vvicked a Creature, as my ſelf; and if it appeare plainly, that all my mi-ſeries vvere redreſſed, by this meanes; vvhat perſon, how vvicked ſoeuer he may be, can find anie thing, to be afrayd of, heer? For, how wicked ſoeuer, anie other bodie may haue been, he vvill neuer be ſo yet, after the enioying of ſo great Fauours, from our B. Lord, as I had receaued. And, vvho can euer come to diſ-confide in his Diuine Maieſtie, vvho had patience vvith me, ſo long, vpon this onlie reaſon, Becauſe I deſired, and pro-cured ſome meanes, for time, and place, wherein

he

he might be with me? And euen this little thing, I did often, without anie inclination of mine owne, but only by the great violence, which either I offered to my ſelf, or els was offered to me, by our Lord.

* *Note this good Concluſion vpon the Premiſes.*

Since * therefore, the vſe of Mentall Prayer is ſo fitt; yea and ſo very neceſſarie, euen for ſuch, as ſerue not God, but offend him; and ſince no bodie can truly find anie ſuch hurt, which it can poſſibly doe, as would not be much greater without Prayer; at leaſt, how can ſuch forbeare it, as ſerue Almightie God, and deſire to ſerue him? Moſt certainly, vnleſſe a man haue a minde, to paſſe through the troubles, & miſeries of this life, with an addition of more miſerie, and to ſhut vp the verie gate againſt God himſelf, for feare, leaſt he ſhould giue him comfort, by this meanes, I cannot poſſibly vnderſtand this proceeding of his. I haue, really, great compaſſion, and ſorrow, for thoſe poore Soules, who will needs ſerue Almightie God, vpon their owne coſt; for, as for them, who vſe Mentall Prayer, our Lord himſelf beares their charges; ſince, for the little paines they take, he giues them ſo much guſt, that ſo, they may the better be able, to endure the taking of that paines in his company. Of theſe guſts, which our Lord is pleaſed to giue to ſuch, as perſeuer in the exerciſe of Mentall Prayer, there ſhall be more diſcourſe heerafter; and I will not make it heer. Only this, I will be bold to ſay, that, of all thoſe ſo great fauours, which it euer pleaſed our Lord to doe

doe me, the verie Gate, was Prayer; and if that come once to be ſhut, I know not, how God ſhall doe vs fauours. For though he ſhould haue a minde, to enter into a Soule, to regale both it, and himſelf in it, there is no meanes, by which to doe it; ſince he muſt haue it all to himſelf; and it muſt be cleane, and pure; and it muſt alſo haue a great deſire, to receaue fauours. And if our ſelues, on the other ſide, bring manie impediments, and take no courſe to remoue them, how ſhall we euer thinke, he can come to vs; and how can we conceaue, that he will help vs?

Now, to the end that his mercie may be ſeen, and the great benefit, which it was for me, not to haue giuen ouer, my Praying, and Reading, I will heer declare (ſince the vnderſtanding of it, imports ſo much) what batterie, the Diuel raiſes againſt a Soule, to gaine it; and what diligences, and, as it were, art and mercie, is vſed by B. Lord, for procuring to reduce it, to himſelf; that ſo, others may preſerue themſelues, from thoſe dangers, from which I kept not my ſelf. And, aboue all things, I humbly deſire men, for that great loue, wherewith our Lord goes endeauouring to winne vs back againe to himſelf, that they will keep themſelues carefully, out of the * occaſions of Sinne; for, when once we are engaged therein, there is no truſt, or confidence to be had, where we are encountred, and aſſaulted, by ſo manie enemies, whilſt we, the while, are ſubiect to ſuch weaknes, which diſables vs, to make anie defence.

* *Note this, very well; for nothing imports more, thē this.*

I would faine be able heer, to make a draught, and deſcription, of that captiuitie, wherein my Soule was, at thoſe times; for I well vnderſtood my ſelf to be in captiuitie; and yet I could not tell very well, to what I whas a Slaue; nor could I entirely belieue, that that which my Confeſſours thought fitt to aggrauate no more, was ſo very ill, as yet, I was apt to find it. A certaine perſon told me, when I went to him once, with a ſcruple, that, although I were in ſtate of vſing high Contemplation, yet ſuch occaſions, and conuerſations, were of no inconuenience to me. This hapned to me, towards the latter end, when I, by the fauour of God, vvent ſeparating my ſelf, more and more, from great dangers; but yet, I did not vvholy auoid occaſions. But now, vvhen they obſerued my good deſires, and my exerciſe of Mentall Prayer, they thought, I did great matters; but as for me, my Soule vnderſtood vvell enough, that it vvas not ſo much, as to performe, what I vvas obliged, for one, to vvhome I owed ſo much. I haue now, both pittie, and grief, to conſider, hovv much my Soule ſuffered at that time; and the little help, it gott from anie, but Almightie God; beſides the great facilities, and ouuertures, vvhich they made for me, towards certaine paſtimes, and contentments, by making me belieue, that they vvere lavvfull.

* *A great and groſs errour.*

But novv, the torment alſo, vvhich I had, by hearing Sermons, vvas not little; for I had a great affection, to heare them; in ſuch ſort, that, if I ſavv anie

anie man preach with ſpirit, & very well, I carried a moſt particular affection to him; and that without anie endeauour of mine; nor doe I know, how I came to haue it. Me thought, no Sermon ſeemed ſo ill to me, which I could not gladly heare; though others would be of opinion, that he preached not well; but then, if the Sermon were good, it gaue me a very particular ſatisfaction. To ſpeake of God, or heare him ſpoken of, did, in effect, neuer wearie me; I meane, after I had once begunne to vſe Mentall Prayer. Yet, on the one ſide, I was much comforted, with hearing Sermons; but, on the other ſide, they tormented me, becauſe I vnderſtood thereby, that I was not, by manie degrees, anie ſuch Creature, as I ought to haue been. I humbly begged of our B. Lord, that he would help me; but I belieue (by what I can now coniecture) that I was wanting, in the point of placing all my confidence, in his Diuine Maieſtie, and * totally diſconfiding in my ſelf. I ſought for remedie; and I vſed manie diligences; but I vnderſtood not, that all is good for nothing, vnleſs firſt we ſtripp our ſelues entirely, of all confidence in our ſelues, and lodge it all, vpon Almightie God. I deſired, to liue a true life; for then I vnderſtood well enough, that, indeed, I did not liue, but that I fought, with the verie ſhaddow of death. But there was no bodie, who would giue me life; and as for me, I was not able to take it; and he, who was only able to giue it, had no reaſon, to bring me ſuccour; ſince he,

* *A point of very great importance.*

hauing drawne me to himself so very often, I had yet forsaken him.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

She declares, by vvhat meanes our Lord beganne to avvake her Soule, and giue her light, in so great darknes; and to strengthen also her Vertues, that so she might offend him, no more.

BVt now, my Soule was already growne, to be very wearie; and yet, the ill habits, which I had made, & the ill customes, which I had vsed, would not permit her, to be vnwearied, and take rest. It hapned to me one day, vpon my going into the Oratorie, that I saw a Picture, vvhich had been brought in, thither, to be kept; for they had borrowed it, to serue, for a certaine Festiuitie, vvhich vvas to be celebrated in the House, about that time. The Picture vvas of Christ our Lord, full of vvounds, & soares; and it vvas so deuoutly made, that, vvhen I looked vpon it, it moued me much; for it represented very vvell, vvhat he had endured for vs. And the sense of the little gratitude to our Lord, vvhich I had conceaued, and expressed, for those vvounds of his, vvas such, that me thought, my verie hart, did euen splitt. And I cast my self earnestly downe, neer the Picture, vvith a great showre of teares, beseeching our Lord humbly,

and

ınd earneſtly, that he vvould ſtrengthen me ſo farre, once for all; as that, at length, I might offend him no more.

I was beſides, very much deuoted, to the glorious S. Marie Magdalen; and I thought much, and often, of her Conuerſion; and eſpecially, vvhenſoeuer I receaued the B. Sacrament. For, knowing, at that time, that our Lord vvas moſt certainly in my verie boſome, I placed my ſelf at his feet, as conceauing, that my teares vvould not be deſpiſed by him. I know not very vvell, vvhat I ſayd; but yet I know, that he, vvho vvas pleaſed, that I ſhould ſhed thoſe teares, did ſhew me fauour enough, for his part; ſince I forgot the ſenſe, and tendernes thereof, ſo ſoone. And I recommended my ſelf, to that glorious Saint, that ſhe might help me, to obtaine pardon of my Sinnes. But I conceaue, that I profited the more, in that laſt time, vvhen I prayed before the Picture; becauſe then,* I vvas growne into very great diſtruſt of my ſelf; and placed all my confidence, in Almightie God. To my thinking, I told him then, that I vvould* neuer riſe from thence, till he granted me, the humble Suite, which I had made; and I am fully of opinion, that it did me good; for, I haue gone improuing much, euer ſince that time.

* *Note.*

* *This vvas the beginning, of many great bleſsings.*

Now I continued to hold this manner of Prayer; becauſe, not being able to diſcourſe with my Vnderſtanding, I procured to repreſent Chriſt our Lord, to my minde, as being then, within my verie ſelf; and I euer alſo found it, to proue better

with me, in my opinion, when I conceaued my ſelf, to find him all alone. For, he being alone, and I being ſo much afflicted, me thought, he was to admitt me, yea, and to aſſiſt me too, as a perſon, who was in neceſſitie, and miſerie. Of this kind of Simplicities, I had manie; and in particular, I vſed to find my ſelf very well, in the Prayer of the Garden; yea, and I was in my kingdome, when I might accõpanie him there. I thought alſo much, vpon that Sweat, togeather with the great afflictiõ, which he ſuſtained then; and I wiſhed, that I might haue been permitted, to wipe that moſt painefull Sweat, from his face; but I remember, how, in fine, I neuer durſt reſolue, to preſume to doe it; ſo grieuouſly, did my Sinnes repreſent themſelues to me. Howſoeuer, I remained there, by him, as long as my thoughts would giue me leaue; but, the truth is, I had ſtore of ſuch, as tormented me. Moſt nights, during manie yeares, before I went to reſt; and when I was recommending my ſelf to God, ere I ſlept, I euer thought a little, vpon this paſſage, of his Prayer in the Garden; and that, euen before I was a Religious woeman; for, they told me, that I might gaine manie Indulgences by it; and, at leaſt, I am of opinion, that my Soule got much, by this meanes; becauſe thus, I beganne to make Mentall Prayer, euen without expreſly knowing, what it was; and then, it was as vſuall for me, not to omitt this cuſtome, as not to faile of bleſſing my ſelf, with the Signe of the Croſſe, before ſleep.

But,

But, to returne to what I was saying, of the torment, which my thoughts were wont to giue me. This māner of proceeding, without discourse of the Vnderstāding, hath this in it, That the Soule must both gaine much, and loose much; I meane, all consideration, and discourse is lost; for, as for profiting, they profit much, who vse it, since all such Prayer, is Loue. But, to arriue to this point, & pitch, it will cost euerie bodie, a great deale of paines, except such, as our Lord vouchsafes to conduct, in a short time, to Quiet Prayer; of which kind, I know some; and for them, who goe by this way, it will be good to haue some Booke, or other, at hand, that so they may recollect themselues quickly. As for me, it did me also good, to looke vpon Fields, or Flowers, or Water; for, in these things, did I find the memorie of our Creatour, as I also did, in mine owne ingratitude, and Sinnes; all which particulars, were wont to awake me, and recollect me, and to serue me, in stead of a Booke; for, as for Heauen, and such high things as that, my Vnderstāding was so dull, that I could neuer (I say, neuer) be able to haue, or frame anie imagination, or fancie, concerning them, till our Lord represented them to me, by other meanes. And I had so very little abilitie, to represent things to my minde, by way of the vnderstanding-part, that my Imagination serued me not, to worke vpon anie thing, but only what I saw with mine eyes; which yet others are able enough to doe, who know, how to forme certaine representa-

tions of things to themselues, vpon which they can recollect their thoughts.

For my part, I could only thinke vpon Christ our Lord, as man; but yet it is very true, that how much soeuer I read of his Beautie, or saw his Pictures, yet could I neuer represent him, to my self, but iust so, as one, who were either in the darke, or els stark blind, might be able, at that verie time, to represent anie other person to himself. For, though such an one, may speake with such another, & know, that he is with that person, because he is sure, that the sayd person is there; yet, in fine, he doth but vnderstand, and belieue him, to be there, for he sees him not; and in this sort, did it happen to me, when I thought of our Lord.

Vpon this reason, was I so great a friend, and fauourer of the vse of Images, or holie Pictures. Miserable Creatures are they, who loose this benefit, through their owne fault. And it appeares also well enough, that they doe not loue our Lord; for if they loued him, they would be glad, to see his Picture; as heer it giues vs contentment, so see the pictures of those persons, whome we loue.

About this time, they gaue me the Confessions of S. Augustin; and, it seems, our Lord did so ordaine it; for, neither did I procure them, nor had I euer seen them. I bare a very great affection, to this Saint, because the Monasterie, where I liued, before I grew to be Religious, was of his Order; and besides, in regard, that he had been a Sinner;

for

or I alwaies found particular comfort in those saints, who, after hauing been Sinners, were conuerted to our Lord; as conceauing, that I should haue help, by their meanes; and that our Lord might also be induced to forgiue me, as he had done them. Saue only, that I was discomforted by this consideration, (as I haue sayd before) that our Lord called them but once, and they returned not, to fall from him, anie more; but, as for me, I had falne so often, that it afflicted me, to the verie hart. But yet still, when I considered the loue he bore me, I grew to be encouraged againe; for I neuer distrusted his mercie, though I doubted of my self, very often.

O my deare Lord! how mightily doth that obstinate stiffnes amaze me, to which my Soule must needs haue been subiect, whilst it receaued so manie helps, at thy hand; and all in vaine? And it strikes me with much feare, to consider, how little I was able to winne vpon my self, all that while; and, how I remained still bound vp, from resoluing to giue my self, vvholy to thee. But, vvhen once I beganne to read the sayd Confessions, me thought, that Case, vvhich had been his, vvas also now, directly mine owne; and I recommended my self much, to that glorious Saint. But, vvhen I came, aftervvard, to his Conuersion, and read, hovv he heard that Voice in the Garden, it vvas, to my thinking, as if our Lord had made it to be vttered for me; so quick vvas that sense, vvhich I had therof, in my hart; and I vvas, for a very

great vvhile, euen dissolued, as it vvere, in teares, and felt a great affliction; and vexation. O my deare Lord; hovv much doth a Soule grovv to suffer, and vvhat torments doth it endure, for the loosing of her libertie, vvhilst yet she vvas created, and ordained, to be the Ladie of her self, and to command? For my part, I am in a wonder, how I could be able to endure so great torments. But blessed be Almightie God, who gaue me life, till I might get out of that so deadly a death. And now, me thought, my Soule was obtaining great strength, at the hands of that Diuine Maiestie; and that now, he might grow to be pleased, to heare my Outcryes, and haue compassion of my so manie teares.

Vpon this, my affection to spend more time with him, beganne to encrease; and to take my self also, out of the way of ill occasions; for, when they once were gone, I began, to loue his Diuine Maiestie againe. At least, I thought, I might conclude my self then, to loue him; but the truth is, that I vnderstood not, as I ought to haue vnderstood, in what, the true loue of God, did consist; and (to the best that I am able to iudge) I did euen scarce make an end, of disposing my self finally, to resolue to serue him, when his Diuine Maiestie began already, to vouchsafe me new Regalos, and Fauours. And it seemes, that, what others must be glad to endeauour to get, with much labour, our Lord was faine to find meanes, to make me content to accept; which was, in these

latter

latter yeares, to delight, and regale me, in great measure. I neuer presumed to desire, that he would giue me euen so much, as anie tendernes of deuotion; but I only begd so great mercie, as might winne him to allow me pardon, for my sinnes already committed; and so much grace, as that I might committ no more. But, I seing, how great they were, durst neuer aduisedly desire anie regalo's, or spirituall delights at his hands; for, me thought, he shewed me pittie enough, (and it was really, a very eminent mercie) to consent, that I should ariue to be in his presence; considering how well I knew, that, if himself had not procured it, I should neuer haue come. Only once, in my whole life, I remember, that, whilst I was in great drynes of Deuotion, I desired him, to giue me some little spirituall gust; but as soone, as I reflected, vpon what I had donne, I remained so full of confusion by it, that the onlie vexation I had, to see my self, with so little humilitie, did giue me that verie aduantage, which I had presumed to beg.

I was not ignorant, that it might be, no way, an vnlawfull thing, to desire it; but I conceaued that this was true, for them, vvho vvere vvell disposed to receiue it, by their hauing procured true deuotion, vvith all their power; vvhich consists, in not offending Almightie God, and in being inclined, and resolued, to doe all that, vvhich vvas good. And mee thought those teares of mine, vvere but faint, and feminine teares, and vvithout

anie force, or ſtrength; ſince I obtained not that, by them, which I deſired; though yet, vpon the whole matter, I alſo beliue, that they were vſefull to me, as I haue ſayd. For, in particular, after thoſe two ſeuerall times, of that ſo great compunction, and trauaile of hart, which I had, I beganne to giue my ſelf more, to Prayer, and to intereſt my ſelf leſſe, in ſuch things, as might doe me hurt; though yet I did not vtterly giue them ouer; but God (as I was ſaying) went helping me, to withdraw my ſelf, out of thoſe dangers. For, his Diuine Maieſtie did but expect ſome preparation, or diſpoſition in me, that ſo, his Spirituall Fauours might grow on, in ſuch ſort, as I ſhall relate; our Lord being not accuſtomed to grant them, but to ſuch, as maintaine their Conſciences in more puritie, then mine had formerly poſſeſſed.

THE

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

She beginnes to declare the Fauours, vvhich our Lord did her in Prayer; and speakes of that, vvherein vve may be able to help our selues; And hovv much it also imports vs, to vnderstand the said Fauours, vvhich our Lord is pleased to doe vs. She humbly desires of him, to vvhome she sends this account of herself, that, vvhatsoeuer she shall declare from hence forvvard, may remaine in secret vvith him, since he had commanded her to set dovvne, in so particular a manner, the Fauours, vvhich our Lord vvas pleased to doe her.

I Enioyed sometimes (as I sayd) some beginnings, of that, which I shall now declare; though it ssed to passe away, very quickly. It fell out, in this epresentation, whereof I spake, when I placed my elf, neer Christ our Lord; yea, and sometimes lso, when I would be reading; that there would ome suddainly vpon me, and without either exectation, or ante immediate preparation, on my art, such an euident feeling of the * presence of Almightie God, as that I could, by no meanes, doubt, but that either he was within me, or els I, ll ingulfed in him. This was not in the manner of

* *Her entrance into the receaueing Supernaturall Fauours.*

of a Vision, but I thinke they call it Mystical Theologie; and it suspends the Soule in such sort, that she seems to be wholy out of her self. The Will, is in act of louing; the Memorie seems to me, to be, in a manner, lost; the Vnderstanding, in my opinion, * discourses not; & although, it be not lost; yet it workes not in that kinde, as I was saying, but remaines, as it were, amazed, to consider, how much it vnderstands; though yet it pleases God, that it vnderstand it self also, not to vnderstand fully, anie part of that, which his Diuine Maiestie represents to it. Before this time, I had been vsed, to finde a very constant, and continuall tendernes, or sweetnes, which, I thinke, may, in some part, be procured; and it is a regalo, which is neither wholy sensuall, nor wholy spirituall; but it is wholy the guift, and blessing of Almightie God; and it seemes, that we may greatly help, towards the obtaining this, for our selues, by considering our owne basenes, and the ingratitude, which we vse, towards Almightie God; how much he did for vs; his Passion, and grieuous Torments; his whole Life, which was so full, of affliction; to delight our selues, in considering his Workes, and his Greatnes; & how much he loues vs; and manie other such things, as these; vpon which, whosoeuer shall haue care to profit, will be able to fall manie times; though yet, he haue iust then, no particular designe that way. And if, togeather with these reflections, the partie fall out, to be possessed, and seazed with anie loue of Al-

* *It vvorkes not indeed, by vvay of vsing Discourse, or makeing Inferences; but yet it vvorks, by vvay of Contëplation, and Admiration of the Infinite Obiect, being God, vvho is set before it.*

lmightie God, the Soule will be all regaled; the art will be full of tendernes, and relenting; and ares will alſo abound; which ſometimes we all ſeem to haue gotten, as it were, by force; d, at other times, our Lord will ſeeme to haue ought them ſo vpon vs, as that we were not ble, to reſiſt them.

Now it ſeems, that his Diuine Maieſtie is pleaſed pay vs heer, for the little poore care, we tooke ſerue him, with ſo high a guift, as that comfort which he beſtowes vpon a Soule, who ſees her lf able to lament, & weep, for hauing offended great a Lord. And I wonder not a whitt, at this; r, me thinkes, ſhe hath reaſon enough, and to are, for receauing ioy, and comfort, vpon this ccaſion. There, doth the Soule reioyce, & there, oth ſhe regale her ſelf. I like that Cõpariſon well, hich offers it ſelf to me now, That theſe ioyes of rayer, ſhould be ſomewhat like thoſe others, hich are in Heauen. For, as they ſee no more ere, then God is pleaſed that they ſhall ſee, according to their deſerts; & they acknowledging, ow ſmall thoſe deſerts are, euerie one of them, is ighly well content, with the place, wherein he is; hough yet, there be an exceſſiue differẽce, betweẽ he ioyes of ſome, and of others, in Heauen; yea nuch more, then there is between ſome ſpirituall oyes, and others, heer on earth; which yet is very reat. And really, a Soule, when God doth her this auour, at firſt, is very apt to thinke, that there renaines no more then, to be deſired; and ſhe eſteems

esteems her self then, to be abundantly satisfyed, for all the seruice, which euer she was able to pay Almightie God; and I finde, that she hath, at least, reason enough, to thinke so. For, euen one of those single teares (which yet we may, after a sort, procure, in some part, euen of our selues; though still, without the assistance, and fauour of God, we can doe absolutly nothing at all) cannot be payd for, and purchased, in my opinion, with all the labours, and troubles of the world. For, a Soule gaines much by them; and indeed, what greater gaine can possibly, anie Creature acquire, then to haue some kinde of testimonie, that she is pleasing to Almightie God.

Note. So that, let whosoeuer shall arriue to this * point, praise God very much, and acknowledge himself, to be mightily in his Debt; for, already there is good apparance, that his Diuine Maiestie designes such a person, for his seruice, in his owne House; and hath chosen him, for his Kingdome, without intētion, that he shall turne his back from him, anie more. And, let vs not care for certaine odd Humilities, which be in the world, whereof I intend to treat. For, some will needs esteem it to be Humilitie, * not to vnderstand those Guifts, which our Lord is bestowing vpon them. But, as for vs, let vs well, and very well know, how the Case stands with vs; Namely, that Almightie God bestowes them vpon vs, without anie merit at all, of ours; and let vs be thankfull to his Diuine Maiestie, for them. For, if we know not, what

A great & foolish errour.

fauour

fauour we receaue, we ſhall not ſtirre our ſelues vp, to loue him for them, as we ought. For it is a moſt certaine truth, that the better we finde, that we are rich (knowing firſt, that of our ſelues we are poore) we grow to profit ſo much the more; yea and euen our very Humilitie, will proue to be more entire, and ſincere. That other courſe, ſerues but to accowardize the minde, and to make it hold it ſelf vncapable, of receauing great benefits, if our Lord, beginning once to beſtow them, it ſhall alſo beginne, to fright it ſelf, by a feare of Vaine-Glorie. But let vs rather belieue, that he, who doth vs ſo great Fauours, will giue vs alſo grace, that, if the Diuel tempt vs, vpon theſe occaſions, we ſhall haue knowledge, how to vnderſtand him, and ſtrength from God, how to reſiſt him; I meane, if we goe on, with plainenes, and ſinceritie, as in the ſight of Almightie God, pretending euer, to content him only, without reſpect to men. For, it is a very euident, and certaine truth, that we loue a perſon the better, when we remember very freſhly, what benefits we haue receaued at his hands. And, if it be both lawfull, and meritorious, for vs to be euer keeping in memorie, that we haue our verie Being from Almightie God; and that he created vs of nothing; and that he vpholds vs ſtill; togeather with all thoſe other benefits, of his Paſſion, and Death, which he endured for euerie one of vs, who are now aliue, long before we were borne; why ſhould it not be alſo lawfull for me, who was

wont

wont to treat of nothing, but vanities, to vnderstand, and see, and consider these things, often; especially when now our Lord allowes me so great a blessing, as that I would not willingly, euen so much as speake of anie thing, but of him. And now, behold heer a rich Iewel, which (remembring, that it is bestowed vpon vs, and that already we are in possession thereof) inuites, and euen obliges vs, to loue our Blessed Lord; And this, in fine, is the totall good of that Prayer, which is grounded vpon Humilitie.

But what will then occurr, when they shall finde, that other more precious Iewels are come into their power, and possession, which our Lord imparts to some of his seruants; as namely, a profund contempt, both of the whole world, yea and of themselues? It is cleare, that, in this case, we must hold our selues, for deeper debtours, and more obliged, to serue him; and to vnderstand, that, of our selues, we had no part of this Treasure, at all; and to know the great bountie of our Blessed Lord; who, to a Soule so wicked, and so absolutly without all merit, as mine, (for which, the first of those Iewels aforesayd, was not only sufficient, but, by much, too great) would yet needs load mee still, with greater treasures, then I could euen tell, how to desire. We must, in such cases, as these, procure to get new strength wherewith to serue him; and by no meanes to be vngratefull; for, our Lord giues them euer, vpon this condition, that, if we vse not well, that treasure,

now

ſure, and high place, wherein he puts vs, he will ſtripp vs of them againe; and, as for our parts, we ſhall come to be more poore, then euer we were, & ſo his Diuine Maieſtie will diſpenſe his Treaſures, to ſuch others, as he ſhall thinke fitt; & who may benefit, both themſelues, and others, by the good vſe thereof.

But now, how ſhall that man improue his owne Stock, and ſpend thereof, with latitude of hart, vpon others, whilſt yet he is not come ſo farr, as to know, that himſelf is rich? It is, in my opinion, an impoſſible kinde of thing (conſidering the grounds of Humane Nature) for one to doe great, and goodlie things, if he vnderſtand not himſelf, to be fauoured, by Almightie God; for, we are ſo miſerable Creatures, and ſo inclined to delight in things of this world, that we can hardly abhorre, effectually, all that, which heer we enioy (and especially, to doe it, with great libertie of Spirit) if we vnderſtand not our ſelues, to haue ſome kind of taſt, or pawne, concerning Heauenlie things; for, by meanes of ſuch bleſſings, as theſe, doth our Lord impart that Fortitude to vs, which we loſt by our Sinnes. And he ſhould but vnluckily deſire, and exhort a man, to deſpiſe, and abhorre the world; and encourage him to acquire, all thoſe great vertues, which Chriſtians of high perfection, vſe to poſſeſſe; if he were not vpheld therein, by a Liuelie Faith, and by his hauing alſo felt ſome aſſurance, of the loue, which our Lord, was pleaſed to beare

him. For naturally, we are ſo very dead, that we looke not after anie thing, but that, which we ſee, at the preſent; and ſo, theſe verie Fauours, are the things, which awake, & ſtrengthen our Faith. I ſay not, but that it may very well be, that I, being ſo very wicked, am apt, to iudge of others, by my ſelf; & that thoſe others may need no more, then the verie light, and truth of Faith, for the making their workes very perfect; but I (as very miſerable) haue beē in need, of all poſſible helps. Others may well ſay what they pleaſe, but I relate, what hath occurred to me; as they, who haue power ouer me, cōmand; and if he, to whome I ſend it, doe not like it, he may teare it; as knowing better then I, what is vnfitt; Whome I humbly beſeech, euen for the loue of our Bleſſed Lord, that, whatſoeuer I haue ſayd hitherto, concerning my wicked Life, and my Sinnes, he will publiſh it; and from this inſtant, I giue leaue, both to him, and all them, who haue been my Ghoſtlie Fathers (of which number he is, to whome this goes addreſſed) that they doe it euen now, whilſt I am liuing; to the end, that euen now, I may deceaue the vvorld, no longer; vvhich els, perhaps, may thinke, that there is ſome good thing in me; and really, and very really, I ſpeake truth, to the beſt, that I can novv vnderſtand of my ſelf, that he ſhall giue me great comfort, if he vvill doe it.

But as for that, vvhich ſhall followv heerafter, in this Diſcourſe, I allovv him no ſuch libertie, at all; nor vvill I, by anie meanes, giue vvay, that if they

they chance to ſhevv the thing to anie Creature, they declare, vvho that perſon is, vvith vvhome it paſſed; nor, vvho vvrote it; and for this reaſon, haue I forborne, to name, either my ſelf, or anie other, vvho hath interuened to the Storie. But I haue done the beſt I could, to vvrite it ſo, as that I may not be knowne; and I deſire, for the loue of our Lord, that it may euer remaine, as a Secret. For it vvill ſuffice, that there are ſo learned, and graue perſons, as may authorize anie thing, vvhich is good, if our Lord vvill giue me grace, to relate it; and if there be, it muſt be his, and not mine; for they only, vvho command me to vvrite it, knovv, that I vvrite it; and at the preſent, they are not heer; and I vvrite it alſo, as it vvere, by ſtealth, and vvith vvant of time, and vvith ſome trouble, becauſe I am kept from ſpinning; and I liue in a poore Houſe, and haue buſines enough; and, if our Lord gaue me more abilitie, and memorie, (of both vvhich, I haue very little) I might yet, by meanes thereof, ſerue my ſelf, of vvhat I had heard, or read. So that, if I ſay anie thing, vvhich is good, our Lord vvill ſerue himſelf of it, for ſome good end; but vvhatſoeuer is ill ſayd, vvill be mine owne; and that, your Reuerence may blot out. And, both for the one, and for the other, there vvill be no reaſon at all, to declare my name. During anie bodies life, it is cleare, that the good he doth, is not to be related; and after death, it vvill alſo ſerue for nothing, in this caſe; but only to make it looſe all authoritie, and credit, for

hauing been recounted, by a perſon, ſo baſe, and ſo vvicked, as my ſelf. And, becauſe I hope you vvill doe that, vvhich I ſay, (and I humbly beg it of you, euen for the loue of our Lord; and of thoſe others alſo, vvho are to ſee it) I write, as you ſee, vvith all libertie, and clearnes; for otherwiſe, I ſhould haue great ſcruple to doe it, but only, for the meer declaration of my Sinnes; and in that, I haue none at all. As for other things, it is enough, that I am a woemã, to make my wings fall downe, flatt by my ſides; and hovv much more then, ſince I am not only a weoman, but a wicked woeman?

And therefore, whatſoeuer your Reuerence ſhall finde heer, beyond the bare relation of the courſe of my Life, you muſt take, to be only, for your ſelf; ſince you would needs importune me ſo farre, as to make you ſome declaration of the Fauours, which our Lord had been pleaſed to doe me, in Prayer; ſuppoſing euer, that you hold them to be in conformitie, with the Truths of our Holie Catholick Faith; for, if not, you are inſtantly to burne it; and to this Direction, I will ſtand. So that I will declare, what paſſed with me, in this kinde; to the end, that if it ſhall proue conforme to Catholick truth, it may be of ſome ſeruice to you; and if not, that you may be the better able, to vndeceaue my Soule; and ſo, the Diuel may get nothing by that, whereby I tooke my ſelf, to gaine. For, our Lord knowes, that I euer haue procured, to meet with perſons, who might giue me light, as I ſhall ſhew afterward.

But

But, how clearly ſoeuer I ſhall ſtriue to declare theſe things, concerning Prayer, it will fall out to be obſcure enough, for ſuch as haue no experience therein. I will touch alſo, vpon ſome impediments, which (according to my way of vnderſtanding) vſe to oppoſe themſelues against ſuch perſons, as are walking on, in this way; and I will alſo point at ſome others, in which there may be ſome danger, according to what our Lord hath taught me, by experience. And I haue ſince, treated with great learned men, and perſons, who had giuen themſelues to Spirit, manie yeares; and they ſee, that his Diuine Maieſtie hath vouchſafed me, in ſeauen and twentie yeares, wherein I haue vſed Mētall Prayer, (though I haue walked on, ſo ill, & with ſo manie ſtumbling blocks, in the way) that experience, which he hath not allowed to others, in ſeauen and thirtie, yea and in ſeauen and fourtie yeares; whilſt yet, they had ſpent their liues in Pennance, and euer, in a courſe of Vertue.

Let him be Bleſſed for all; and I beſeech his Diuine Maieſtie euēn by what he is himſelf, that he will vouchſafe to be ſerued by me. For, my deare Lord knowes very well, that I pretend no other thing by this, but only, that he may be a little the more exalted, and praiſed; when you ſee, that he would needs plant a Garden, of ſo ſweet Flowers, vpon, and in a Dung-hill, ſo fowle, and filthie, and of ſo very ill ſauour, as I am. I humbly beſeech his Diuine Maieſtie, that I returne not, through my fault, to pluck them all, vp, by

the rootes, and so become againe, what I was before. And this, doe I intreat your Reuerence, that you will beg of our B. Lord, for me; since you know, with more clearnes, what I am, then heer you haue giuen me leaue to expresse.

THE ELEAVENTH CHAPTER.

She declares, in vvhat the fault consists, of not obtaining to loue God vvith perfectiõ, in short time. She beginnes to deliuer it, by a Comparison, vvhich containes Foure degrees of Prayer. And she treats heer of the First, vvhich is very profitable for beginners; and for them also, vvho haue no sensible delight, or gust, in Prayer.

NOw, to speake of them, who beginne to be Seruants of our Blessed Lord, for Loue, (and to me it seemes, to be nothing els, to resolue to follow him, by this way of Prayer, who loued vs so much) I find it to be a thing of so great dignitie, that I regale my self, after a strange manner, euen by the very thought thereof. For, seruile feare will instantly flye away, if we carrie our-selues, as we ought, in this first degree of Prayer. O thou Lord of my Soule, and my eternall Good! how comes it to passe, that, when a Soule resolues to loue thee, and to doe the vttermost she can, to leaue all this world, that so she may the better

employ her self vpon this loue of thee, thou art not pleased, that she should instantly enioy the getting vp, to possesse this perfect loue? But I haue sayd ill; for I ought indeed, to haue sayd, that I complaine against our selues; becausse it is wee, who will not possesse it, since all the fault is ours, for not instantly obtaining this true loue of God with perfection, which carries all kindes of blessings in company thereof. For, the matter is, that we set so high a price, vpon our selues, and we are withall, so slow, in giuing our harts * totally to God, that, as his Diuine Maiestie, on the one side, will not permitt, that we should enioy so pretious a thing, without paying well for it: so, on the other, we neuer make an end, of disposing our selues therein, as we ought. I am able to see well enough, that there is nothing at all, in this world, with which, so great a treasure can be bought; but yet, if we did indeed, what we could, by not fastning our selues, to anie thing of this world, but that all our cares, and considerations, were sent-vp to Heauen, I am confident, that this blessing would be imparted to vs, with very great speed, if speedily, and entirely (as I was saying) we disposed our selues, to the receauing thereof, as some Saints haue done. But the miserie is, that we thinke, we giue God all; and the truth is, that we offer his Diuine Maiestie, but the yearlie Rents, or Reuenues, and Fruits, our selues remaining still, with the rootes, and possession of the Land. We resolue, to make our selues poore,

* *Behold heer the true & great impediment.*

for God's ſake, and it is a point of great merit, to doe ſo; but yet, we returne manie times, to take care, and to vſe diligences enow, that nothing may be wanting to vs; I ſay not, of that, which is neceſſarie, but ſometimes alſo, euen of that, which is ſuperfluous; and to be procuring, alſo, to make friends, who may help vs to it, and ſo put vs ſtill, into more care, yea, & perhaps, into more danger too, (that ſo we may grow to want nothing) then euen we had before, when we were the poſſeſſours of our owne eſtates.

It ſeemes alſo, that, when we came to be Religious, or as ſoone as we beganne to lead a Spirituall life, and to aſpire towards perfection, we gaue-ouer, to care for the honour of this world; and yet, as ſoone as euer anie Creature beginns but to touch vs, in that kind, we forget, that we had already, giuen it away, to Almightie God; and we reſolue ſometimes, to ſnatch it againe, out of his hands, and runne away with it, euen after we ſeemed to haue voluntarily made him, the entire Lord therof. And iuſt thus, doth it alſo happen ſometimes, in other things. Now, this indeed is a very delicate, fine, foolish, ridiculous way of ſeeking the loue of Almightie God, when, togeather with this pretence, we will (as a man may ſay) haue our hands ſtill full of the ſame imperfect inclinations, and affections, vvhich vve had before; ſince vve doe not procure indeed, to effect our owne former good deſires; and ſtill vve endeauour not, at length, to raiſe them vvholy vp,

from

from the earth; and yet vve vvill needs expect, the while, to enioy manie Spirituall comforts, and delights. But this, ſeemes not to be of a Suite; nor doth the one Stuffe, fitt well, vvith the other; and therefore, becauſe vve vvill not once reſolue, to giue our ſelues totally vp, to Almightie God, vve come not totally, to enioy this Treaſure. And I pray God, it may pleaſe his Diuine Maieſtie, to vouchſafe to grant it to vs, though it should be, but by drop, and drop; and though it should grovv to coſt vs, all the labours, and troubles of the vvhole vvorld.

A very great deale of mercie doth our Bleſſed Lord shevv to that perſon, to vvhome he giues the firme purpoſe, and grace, to reſolue vpon procuring this bleſſing, vvith all his power; for certainly, if ſuch an one shall perſeuer, Almightie God vvill deny himſelf to no Creature, but will, by little and little, goe enabling that Soule, in ſuch ſort, as that, at length, it shall find it ſelf to be victorious. But I ſayd, that the Partie muſt haue courage; becauſe the Diuel doth ordinarily, in the beginnings, diſpoſe himſelf, to repreſent, yea and frame, very great difficulties; to the end, that ſo we may not hold-on this way, in good earneſt; as one, who knowes very vvell, vvhat preiudice is like to grovv to him by it; not only, through his loofing the Soule of that Partie, but of manie others alſo; if he, vvho beginns to ſerue God, endeauour once, by his fauour, to ariue to the perfection therof. For, I belieue, that ſuch an one will neuer goe alone, to Heauen, but will

carrie very manie with him; and that, like a good Captaine, he shall finde, that God will giue him a faire Companie. So that, since the Diuel will be sure, to lay such dangers, and difficulties, in his way, there will be need of very great courage, and resolution, to keep one from running away; yea and also, there vvill be need of much, and much, and very much fauour, and mercie of Almightie God, for this purpose.

Now therefore, to speake of the beginnings of such, as be already resolued, to goe in search, after so great a blessing, and to obtaine, vvhat they aspire to, in the end, (for, as for that, vvhereof I vvas going once to speake, concerning Mysticall Theologie (for so I thinke it is called) I vvill treat thereof afterward) the great, and greatest trouble, consists euer, in these verie beginnings. For, those are they, which cost most, when a Soule comes, to giue our Lord the whole Stock. And, in the other degrees of Prayer, which follow, the most part of that, which passes, is delighting, and enioying; though yet still, both the First, and the two Middle ones, and euen the Last, haue, all of them, their seuerall Crosses to carry, yet, in a different kind. But, in fine, all they, who will follow Christ our Lord, must goe by that verie way, where he went, vnlesse they will haue a minde to be lost. And happie are those troubles, which be endured heer, since euen heer, they are so superabundantly recompensed, and payd.

I must now serue my self of some Comparison,

ſon, which yet I would be glad, to forbeare, in egard, that I am a woeman; and would faine ſet hat downe, very ſimply, and plainly, which they ommand me to ſay. But this language of Spirit, is o very hard to be declared, by ſuch, as are vn- earned, like me, that I muſt ſeek ſome particular way, how to doe it. And it is likelie, that I ſhall eldome hitt right, in making the Compariſon erue; but, in that caſe, it may paſſe for your re- creation, to ſee, how very improper, and rude am.

To my remembrance, I haue either read, or heard this * Compariſon, which followes heer; for, my memorie is ſo very imperfect, that I know not how, nor vpon what occaſion, I mett with it, irſt; but it contents me, at leaſt, for the preſent, in order to what I haue in hand. He, who beginnes n the way of Prayer, muſt conceiue that he is be- ginning to frame an Orchard, or Garden, for the contentment, and delight of his Lord; though yet t be in a very vnfruitfull Soile, and full of Weeds. His Diuine Maieſtie now is he, who muſt be pleaſed to plant good Hearbes, and root the ill ones vp. But now wee will make account, that this s done already, in our caſe, when a Soule, not only reſolues, to vſe Prayer, but hath already, be- gunne to vſe it. And now, by the help of our Lord, we muſt procure, like carefull Gardners, that theſe good Herbes, which are planted, may grow; and we muſt take care, to water them, that ſo, they may not wither, but may come to yeild Flowers of ſo excel-

* *This Saint is admirable, in all the Compariſons which ſhe vſes.*

excellent odour, as may ſerue to be of recreation to this Lord of ours; that ſo, he may take pleaſure, to come often into this Garden of his, and delight himſelf, amongſt theſe vertues of our Soules.

Now let vs ſee, in what ſort, theſe Flowers may be watred, that ſo we may come to vnderſtand, what we are to doe, and what trouble it is likelie to coſt; and whether the gaine will proue to be more, then the labour; and how long it will be likely to laſt. As for me, it occurrs to me, to thinke, that theſe Plants may be watred, by fowre wayes: Either, by drawing water, out of a Well, which wee cannot doe whithout much labour, or by way of a * Wheele, with certaine little Buckets, belonging to it, which is eaſily turned about, by the hand; and my ſelf haue drawne ſome, thus, now and then; and I find, that it brings vp more water, with leſſe trouble, then doth that, of the former way. Or els, by meanes of letting in, ſome little Brooke, or Riuer, into the Garden; and, by this meanes, the Garden is watred much better, then by the former; and the earth remaines with more moiſture; and there will not be need, to water it ſo often; and the labour alſo of the Gardner, is much leſſe. Or els, in fine, when there falls a good Showre of Rayne vpon the Garden, for then, the Lord himſelf waters it, without anie labour at all, of ours; and this is, without compariſon, the very farr beſt way, of all the fowre.

But now, for applying theſe foure wayes of vſeing

* *This is a kind of Engine, vvith certaine little leather Buckets faſtned to the ſides of a very great vvheele, vvhich draves vp, very much vvater, vvith great eaſe. In Spanish it is called a Noria.*

vſeing Water, whereby this Garden of ours, is to be preſerued (becauſe a Garden without water, is to periſh) that, which, me thinkes, is to our purpoſe, is, that we may, by this Similitude, declare ſomewhat, of theſe foure degrees of Prayer; into which, our Lord, through his goodnes, hath ſometimes brought my Soule. And I humbly beſeech him, of his mercie, that I may hitt right, vpon what I am about to ſay; in ſuch ſort, as that it may be of vſe, and profit, to one of thoſe perſons, who commanded me to write thus much; and whome our Lord hath drawne further on, in foure moneths, then I was able to get, in ſeauenteen yeares. But certainly, he diſpoſed himſelf better; and ſo, the Gardner hath watred his Orchard, without anie trouble at all, to the Partie, with all theſe foure kindes of Water; though the laſt of the foure, haue not yet, come to his turne, but by drops. But, the buſines goes on, in ſuch ſort, that by the fauour, and help of our Lord, he will quickly ingulfe himſelf therein; and I ſhall be hartily glad, if he laugh at me, in caſe he finde the manner of my declaring this Point in queſtion, to haue been impertinent.

Of them, who beginne to hold Prayer, we may ſay, that thoſe are the perſõs, who draw water out of the Well, which vſes to be very troubleſome, as I haue ſayd; for they are likelie, to take much paines, about recollecting their Senſes; which hauing been vſed, to wander, and goe ſcattered, vp, and downe, it is wont to be of trouble enough.

Theſe

*A good Lesson.

These men* haue therefore need, to goe accustoming themselues, not to desire to see, or heare impertinent things; and to obserue their howers of Prayer; and to loue to be alone; and to consider the life, which they haue lead; and to doe it, hand to hand, by themselues. And though all these, whether they be, either of the First Degree, or of the Last, are to employ themselues vpon these thoughts, very often; yet there is to be of the more, and of the lesse, in these cogitations; as I will shew afterward. At first, they are wont, to be in some paine, because they vse not, to be fully enough satisfyed, that they repent themselues sufficiently of their Sinnes; and yet they faile not to doe it, since they resolue to serue Almightie God, in so very good earnest. They must procure, to meditate much, vpon the Life of Christ our Lord; though the Vnderstanding, will perhaps, be wearie of this. But yet hitherto, we may be able, to be of some help, to our selues; I meane, togeather with the fauour of our Lord; for, without this, the world knowes well enough, that we are not able, so much as to haue a good thought.

Now, This is to beginne, to draw Water out of a Well; and I pray God, there fall out to be any; but at least, the fault is not ours, if there be none; since we endeauour to draw it; and since we doe, what we can, towards the watring of these Flowers. And Almightie God, is so very good, that when (for reasons, best knowne to his Diuine Maiestie, yea, and perhaps, euen for our owne

greater

greater good) he will haue this Well, to be dry, he is pleaſed (ſo that ſtill, we doe our parts, like good Gardners) to ſuſtaine theſe Flowers, without anie Water at all; and to make our vertues grow. I meane heer, by Water, Teares; whereof there may, peraduenture, be none; as alſo no tendernes, or inward feeling of Deuotion.

But, what ſhall he doe now, who ſees, that, for the ſpace of a long time, there is nothing but drynes, and diſguſt, and diſpleaſure; and ſo little deuotion alſo, to goe draw anie more Water, out of the Well? For, certainly, if he did not remember, that he doth ſome kind of pleaſure, and ſeruice, to the Lord of the Garden, and did not take care, not to looſe all the labour, which he hath already vndergone, and the hope alſo of getting more, by ſo great paines, as he takes, to caſt the Bucket ſo often into the Well, and to bring it back, without anie water at all; without doubt, he would giue ouer, outright. And, manie times, it ſhall alſo happen to him, vpon this occaſion, that he will not ſo much as ſtirr his hand; nor will he be able, ſo much as to continue in one good thought; for, already, it is to be granted, that this way of working, by the employment of the Vnderſtanding, is a ſtriuing, to draw Water out of a Well.

But now, as I was ſaying, what is the Gardner to doe in this caſe? I* anſwer, that he is to reioyce, and to receaue much comfort; and to eſteem it, for an incomparable Fauour, that he may be ſuffered

* *A conſideration of much comfort.*

fered, to labour, and worke in the Garden, of so great an Emperour, as God is. And, since he knowes, that he giues contentment to his Diuine Maiestie thereby, (for, the gust, & seruice of God, & not the Gardners owne, is to be his maine, and finall scope) let him giue God glorie, and praise, who proceeds with him, and treats him, in so confident a manner; since he giues him grace, to haue so great care of doing that, which he recommended to him, though he doe not pay him yet, for his paines. And let this Gardner still, help our Lord, to carrie his Crosse; and remember, that the same Lord, liued, and lay vpon the same Crosse, all his life. And let not this man desire, to enioy his Kingdome heer, in this World; nor euer once giue-ouer his Prayer; but let him rather resolue, that, though his drynes of sensible indeuotion, should last with him, as long, as his life, yet he will neuer giue occasion, that Christ our Lord should fall downe, with his Crosse. For, at least, the time will certainly come, when he shall receaue all his wages, at one payment; and let him neuer feare, that his labour can possibly be lost; for, he serues a very good Master, who stands looking earnestly vpon him. And let him make no account at all, of ill thoughts; but consider, that the Diuel did also vex S. Hierome with them, in the verie Wildernes. But these labours, haue their price, and recompence, set out for them; and I assure you, as a person, who haue spent manie yeares, in the feeling therof, that,

when

when sometimes I came to draw, and get but some one single drop of water, out of this blessed Well, I thought, that God did me a great Fauour.

I know well, that these troubles are very great; and I conceaue, that there is more need of courage, for supporting them, then for manie other things, of this world; but yet I haue seen clearly, that God leaues them not, without great reward, euen in this life. For it is most certaine, that, with one of these howers of gust, of himself, which he hath giuen me heer, afterwards I esteem all those sad afflictions, to haue been very well rewarded, which I sustained, in all the former time, of my continuing the vse of Prayer. As for me, I hold, that our Lord will giue these torments (together with manie other temptations, which occurr) manie times, in the beginning; and at other times, towards the end; to try, who are his true Louers; and to know if they can drinke of his Chalice, and will help him, to beare his Crosse, before he will depositate so great treasures in them. And I conceaue, that his Diuine Maiestie is resolued to carrie vs on, by this way, to the end, that we may first vnderstand well, how little we are worth; for, the Fauours, which sometimes he imparts afterward, are of so great dignitie, that he will, first, haue vs see our miserie, by experience, before he impart those great Fauours, to vs; least otherwise, that should happen to vs, which did to Lucifer.

*A hard question, most clearly, and excellently answered.

But, what is it, O my Lord, which thou art doing? Were * it not better, for the good of that Soule, which thou knoweſt, to be already thine, and which puts it ſelf into thy hands, to follow thee, whitherſoeuer thou wilt goe, though it were euen to the verie death of the Croſſe; and to reſolue to help thee to carrie it, and neuer to leaue thee alone, vnder that burthen? No; for, whoſoeuer findes this reſolution in himſelf, hath nothing left for him, to feare. Spirituall perſons haue no reaſon at all, to be afflicted, who are already placed, in ſo eminent condition, as it is, to treat with God, hand to hand; and to forſake the idle paſtimes of this world. The greateſt part of your buſines is diſpatcht already; and praiſe you his Diuine Maieſtie for the ſame, and confide very fully in his goodnes; for he neuer yet failed his friends. Shut-vp the eyes of your Minde, from conſidering, why he giues ſenſible deuotion to another, in ſo few dayes; and not to me, in ſo manie yeares. Let vs belieue, and know, that all this, is done by him, for our greater good; and let his Diuine Maieſtie conduct vs, by what way he will; for now, we are no longer our owne, but his; and he doth vs Fauour enough, in permitting vs, to digg in his Garden, and to ſuffer vs to be ſo neer the Lord thereof. For it is certaine, that he remaines with vs; and whether he be pleaſed, that the Plants, and Flowers, of his Garden, may grow, or not grow, either more or leſſe, what is that to the purpoſe? Doe thou

diſpoſe

disposse so, of things, O Lord, as shall pleasse thee best; and let me, only, not offend thee; nor let my vertues be lost, if thou haue giuen me anie. I am resolued, O Lord, to suffer, since thou wouldst suffer; and thy Will, be accomplished in me, in all kindes; and let not thy Diuine Maiestie be pleased, that a thing of so high value, as thy Loue, may euer be giuen to anie such people, as will not serue thee, but only for delights, and gusts.

It is heer to be noted much, (and I speake it, because I know the truth of it, by experience) that the Soule, which beginnes to walke in this way of Mentall Prayer, with firme purpose, & can bring her self once, to a finall resolution, neither to be comforted, nor discomforted greatly, because our Lord doth either giue, or not giue these spirituall gusts, or tendernes of deuotion, hath already passed through a very great part of his way. And let him not once thinke of turning back, how much soeuer he may faulter, or stūble; for, his Building is layd, and grounded, vpon a firme Foundation.

So that, the true Loue of God, consists not, in hauing teares, or tendernes, or Spirituall gusts, which we are wont, for the most part, to desire, and to take comfort in; but to serue his Diuine Maiestie, with * Iustice, and Fortitude, and Humilitie. For, in that other course, me thinkes, we are rather on the taking hand, then on the giuing, anie thing of our owne. As for poore, weake,

* *Marke vvell these masculine, and massye vvords.*

weake, sillie woemen, and who are of little courage, like me, me thinks I could find it fitt, that our Lord, should carrie them on, with Regalo; that so, they might be the better induced, to suffer those afflictions, which it hath pleased his Diuine Maiestie, that they should beare. But, for the true Seruants of God; men of Substance, and solid wayes; men of Learning, and Vnderstanding, to make so much reflection, vpon God's not giueing them tendernes of Deuotion, as, I see, they doe, I confesse, it giues me disgust, euen to heare it. I say not, but that they should receaue these Spirituall delights, when God giues them; yea, and that they should esteem them very much; becausse, in that case, his Diuine Maiestie, will haue seen, that they were conuenient for them; but only, that, when they haue them not, they should not vex themselues; and that they should also vnderstand, that, when God giues them not, they are not conuenient for them; but that they ought to be, and remaine the Lords of themselues, in all things. Let them belieue, that this is a defect, and fault, in them; for I haue seen, and tryed it. Let them belieue, that this is an imperfection; and that it is not, to walke on, with Libertie of Spirit, but rather like weake, and cowardlie people, who dare not set vpon difficulties. And I say not this, so much for them, who are but beginners; (though yet I presse it so farr, becausse it imports very much, that they beginne with this Libertie of Spirit, and resolution) but euen for

for others alſo. For, there are manie, who haue already begunne, and yet, who neuer, in fine, reſolue vpon doing heerin, home, what they ought; and I belieue, that this proceeds, in great part, from their not reſoluing to take vp, and carrie this Croſſe, from the verie beginning. For, ſuch ſhall goe on, ſtill afflicted, as conceauing, that all that, is nothing, which they doe; becauſe when the Vnderſtanding giues ouer to worke, and act, they vſe not to be able to endure it; and yet, perhaps, they will grow euen fatt, and ſtrong, at the verie ſelf ſame time, though themſelues vnderſtand it not, to be ſo.

We are to thinke, and know, that our Lord doth not conſider, and care for theſe things; for, howſoeuer our ſelues may thinke, that they are faults, yet they are not ſo, indeed; and his Diuine Maieſtie knowes our miſerie, and baſe condition, much better, then our ſelues; and conſiders, that theſe Soules deſire to be thinking alwaies, vpon him; and that they deſire, to loue him. And this is that firme purpoſe, which he values, and expects at our hands. But, that other, is but an affliction, which we bring vpon our ſelues; for it ſerues but to diſquiet the Soule, and to giue occaſion, that, if before, it were vnable, to take anie benefit, by ſeruing God, for one hower, it may now be ſo, for fowre. And, manie times (for I haue very great experience of this caſe, and know it to be true, becauſe I haue both conſidered it with care, and haue alſo treated about it, with Spirituall

persons) this growes, euen from our corporall indisposition; for we are so very totally infirme, that this poore, little, wretched Soule of ours, participates in the miseries of the Bodie; and euen the alteration of the weather, and the reuolution of their owne naturall humours, are, many times, the occasion, why, (without euen anie fault of their owne,) they cannot well doe, euen what they would, but are faine to suffer thus, in all kindes. And, when they striue to force themselues, in these coniunctures of time, it proues to be so much the worse with them; and the inconuenience will last, so much the longer. But, discretion must be vsed heerin, to weigh, when this Effect proceeds from this Cause; and they must not oppress, and stifle this poore Soule, but vnderstand, and consider, that it is sick. Let the hower of Prayer, in God's name, be changed; yea, and manie times it will be fitt, to doe so, for some dayes; and let them passe through this banishment of theirs, as well as they can; since it is misfortune, and miserie enough, for a Soule, which doth indeed, loue Almightie God, to see, that she liues in so great miserie; and that she is no way able to doe, euen what her self desires, in regard, that she is lodged, with so vntoward, and ill an Host, as this Bodie is.

I sayd, this was to be done, with discretion; because sometimes, the Diuel will be a cause of these things; and therefore it is good, neither alwaies to leaue the vsuall & set time of Prayer, whensoeuer there

there may be great disturbance, and distraction, in the Vnderstanding; nor yet alwaies, to stand tormenting the Soule, towards the making it doe more, then it can. There are also other exteriour workes of Charitie, & of reading also, which may be vsed; though yet sometimes, the Soule will not be so much as fitt, euen for that; but, in that case, let the Minde be euen subiect, as it were, to the Bodie, for the loue of Almighty God, since, manie other times, the Bodie serues the Soule; and let the Partie, in such cases, take the entertainment, and pastime of conuersation, with others, so that it be holie; or diuert himself, with going a little abroad, to take the Ayre; as the Ghostlie Father shall aduise. For, Experience is a great Schoole-Mistris, in all things, towards the giuing anie one to vnderstand, what may be fitt; and, Almightie God is serued, in all this busines; for, his Yoake is sweet; and it is a thing of much importance, that the Soule be not seruilely dragged, (as one may say) but that it be carried sweetly on, towards the receauing of more benefit, and profit.

So that I aduise, againe, and againe, (for though I say it often, it will doe no hurt, because the matter imports so much) that no bodie is to afflict, nor oppress himself, either through dryenesses, or disquiets, or distraction of thoughts; nor yet to goe, vp, and downe, with anie such kind of tribulation, if they pretend to gaine Libertie of Spirit. But let him once beginne, not to be in such a fright, vpon the sight of the Crosse; and he shall

ſee, how our Bleſſed Lord will help him to beare it; and what contentment he will grow to haue; and how he will be able, to make his profit of all things. For, already, we may ſufficiently perceaue, that, if there be no Spring of Water in the Well, we know not, how to put anie there. True it is, that we muſt, by no meanes, be negligent, and careleſs, but endeauour to draw it out, if there be anie; becauſe then, our Lord is pleaſed to multiply our vertues, by that meanes.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

She proſecutes her Diſcourſe, of the Firſt State, or Degree of Prayer; and declares, how farre we may ariue of our ſelues, by the Fauour of our Lord; And of the hurt it brings, to deſire, that our Spirit may riſe to Supernaturall, and Extraordinarie things, till our Lord himſelf be pleaſed, to ordaine it.

THat, which I pretended to giue to be vnderſtood, in the laſt Chapter (though yet I diuerted my ſelf much, vpon other things, in regard, that I thought them very neceſſarie) was, to declare, how much we might be able, to acquire; and how, in this Firſt part of our deuotions, we might, to ſome proportion, help our ſelues; becauſe the conſidering, and ruminating vpon that, which our Lord

Lord ſuffered for vs, is wont to moue vs to compaſſion; and the ſorrow, and teares, which grow from thence, is a very ſauourie, and delightfull kind of thing. And ſo, to thinke of the Glorie, for which we hope, and of the Loue, which our Lord bore vs; as alſo of his Reſurrection; moues vs to ioy, which is neither wholy Spirituall, nor wholy Senſuall; but this is a vertuous kind of ioy, on the one ſide, as, on the other, that former paine, is very meritorious; And of this ſort, are all thoſe things, which cauſe anie ſuch deuotion, as is acquired in part, by the Vnderſtanding; though yet there be no merit, nor gaine therein, vnleſſe Almightie God be pleaſed to giue it.

But now, it will be very fitt, for a Soule, which our Lord hath not raiſed anie higher, not to procure to exalt her ſelf; and let this be very well noted; for, the contrarie courſe will help her to nothing, but loſſe. In this Degree, or State, ſhe may performe manie good acts, by way of reſoluing to doe great things for Almighty God; and to awake, and ſtirr-vp her loue, and others alſo, by way of aſſiſting her ſelf, to grow-vp in ſeuerall vertues; according to what is contained in a certaine Booke, called, *The Art of ſeruing God*; which is a very good one, and very proper for ſuch as finde themſelues in this State; becauſe the Vnderſtanding doth act, and exerciſe it ſelf, heer. She may alſo repreſent her ſelf, as in the preſence of Chriſt our Lord; and accuſtome her ſelf, to be greatly enamoured, with his moſt Sacred Humanitie; and

to be euer carrying that, along in her companie; and to be often ſpeaking to it; and to beg his continuall aſſiſtance, in all her neceſſities; and euen to complaine to him, of her afflictions; and to ioy with him, for her contentments, and guſts; but yet, not to forget him, vpon occaſion thereof; And all this, without procuring to expreſſe her ſelf, in anie ſett kind of Prayers, but to make vſe of ſuch words alone, as may haue conformitie with her owne neceſſities, and deſires.

*Note. This is an * excellent way of finding profit, and that in a very ſhort time; and, whoſoeuer ſhall earneſtly labour, to carrie this pretious companie with him ſelf, and ſhall haue proceeded well therein, and ſhall haue found the way of louing, in very good earneſt, this Lord of ours, to whome we owe ſo much, I will giue, and paſſe my word, that this perſon, is a very good Proficient. For this purpoſe, let it not trouble vs a whitt, not to finde our ſelues with ſenſible deuotion, as I haue ſayd; but let vs giue thankes to our Lord, for giuing vs ſo good deſires, to pleaſe him, though our workes be weake.

This way of carrying Chriſt our Lord in our companie, is very vſefull in all the Fowre States, and Degrees of Prayer. It is a moſt ſecure, and ſafe meanes, to goe profiting in the Firſt Degree; and that we ſhall gett quickly, to the Second; and then to be free alſo, in the two laſt, from thoſe dangers, which the Diuel may prouide for vs. For, this, in fine, is that, which we may be able to doe;

doe; and for anie bodie to passe-vp from hence, and to exalt his Spirit, towards the feeling of certaine gusts, which are not allowed him, is but, in my opinion, to loose, both the one, and the other; because, in fine, that, is all Supernaturall; and so, the Vnderstanding being at a Stand, and lost, the Soule remaines all desolate, and with great drynes. And, since this whole Building is grounded vpon Humilitie, the neerer we grow to Almightie God, the more shall we proceed, and profit, in this Vertue; and if we doe not this, all is lost. And it seemes to be no better, then a kind of pride, if we desire to get-vp to a higher ranke, since God doth vs but too much honour, and fauour (considering, how vnworthie we are) in suffering vs, to be so neer, to himself.

But now, it must not be so vnderstood, as if I spoke all this, against raising-vp our thoughts, to consider the high things of Heauen, or of God, or of the greatnesses, which are there aboue; as also of his Incomparable Wisdome. For though I neuer did this, because I had no abilitie for this purpose, (as I haue sayd) and I found my self so miserable, and so meane, that God did me particular fauour, to enable me, to thinke of earthlie things, by meanes whereof, I might come afterward to vnderstand this truth; (for euen this, was no small aduenture for me; and how much more was it so, to consider Celestiall things) yet others may take benefit heerby; and especially, if they haue Learning, and Knowledge, which is, in my opi-

opinion, a great treasure, towards this exercise of Prayer, if it be accompanied with Humilitie. I haue seen the truth of this, very lately, by occasion of some learned men, who begunne not long agoe, and yet haue proceeded, and profited very much; which makes me haue an earnest, and euen a kind of impatient desire, that manie such, as are learned, would grow to be very Spirituall men, whereof I shall giue the reason heerafter.

But now, that which I haue sayd, Namely, That men must not exalt themselues, to rise higher, then God doth raise them, is a certaine kinde of Language of Spirit; and he will vnderstand me, who hath experience of it; but as for me, I know not, how to expresse it, if he know not, how to vnderstand me, by what I haue sayd.

In Mysticall Theologie (whereof I beganne to speake) the Vnderstanding ceases from working, because Almightie God * suspends it; as I will declare heerafter, if I be able, and if he giue me grace, for that purpose. But as for vs, to presume, yea, or so much as to thinke of suspending it, is that, which I am saying, we should not doe. Nor must

* *This suspending of the Thought or Vnderstanding, of vvhich the Saint speakes, is a presenting a multitude of Supernaturall, and Diuine Obiects before it; together vvith a copious infusion of Light, vvich is decerned by it, after a kind of intuitiue vvay at once, vvithout discourse, or trouble: And this Light rests not there, but passes-on to the VVill, and grovves to be, as so much Fyre, for the inflameing it, in the Loue of our Lord. And the Soule doth more properly suffer heer, then act. And novv the Saint giues great vvarning, that people be not so foolish, as to offer at these things, of themselues.*

muſt we leaue to act, and worke thereby, and therewith; for if we doe, we ſhall be ſtupid, and ſottiſh, and cold; and we ſhall effect, neither the one, nor the other. But when our Lord ſuſpends, and ſtopps it, he furniſhes it with matter, vpon which, the Partie may employ himſelf, and at which, he may be amazed; and he makes him vnderſtand more, in the time, and ſpace of ſaying one Credo, (though yet ſtill, not by way of Diſcourſe) then we could tell, how to vnderſtand, with all our humane diligences of this world, in the compaſſe of manie yeares. But now, to exerciſe, and employ the Powers of the Minde, and yet, the while, to thinke of making them ſtand at a ſtay, is a ſenſles kind of fancie, and fooleríe. And I ſay, and ſay againe (though perhaps, it be not well vnderſtood) that this, is no act of anie great Humilitie; and though it ſhould not be guiltie of being a fault, yet it will not faile to be ſubiect, to the puniſhment; for at leaſt, it will be all labour loſt; and the Soule findes it ſelf to remaine with an odd little kinde of diſguſt; as when a man goes to leape, when yet men hold him faſt, by the back. For ſuch an one ſeemes already, to haue employed all his ſtrength, to doe ſomewhat which he deſired, and yet findes himſelf, without effecting, what he pretended. And ſo, whoſoeuer will conſider the matter well, ſhall come to diſcerne, by the slender gaine, which he made, this little half inuiſible duſt of the want of Humilitie, whereof I ſpake. For, in fine, this vertue

vertue hath that excellencie, amongſt others, in it, That there is no worke, or action, in the world, if it be accompanied with that vertue, which will euer leaue the Soule, in diſguſt. There were diuers yeares, when I was wont to reade manie things, and yet vnderſtood none of them all; and there was, afterward alſo, a long time, when, though God gaue me abilitie to vnderſtand, yet could I not ſpeake a word, wherewith to make it be vnderſtood, by others; and this point coſt me no ſmall labour. But, when his Diuine Maieſtie hath a minde to teach it, he doth it ſo, & all at an inſtant, that I am amazed. And one thing I can ſay with much truth, that though I ſpake with manie Spirituall perſons, who had a minde to make me vnderſtand, what our Lord imparted to me, that ſo, I might the better declare things, in particular, and cleare manner, to them; it is certaine, that my dulnes was ſo great, as that their diſcourſe was not of anie vſe to me, at all. And perhaps our Bleſſed Lord (as his Diuine Maieſtie vouchſafed ſtill, to be my Maſter; & let him be bleſſed for euer, ſince it is confuſion enough for me, to be able to ſay thus much, with truth) was pleaſed, that I ſhould haue no bodie, to thanke for it, but himſelf; and that, without my deſiring, or euen wiſhing it, (for in this, I was not a whitt curious, wherein it might haue been a vertue, to be ſo; but I was ſo, about the vanities of the world) he would giue me to vnderſtand, and comprehend it, with all claritie; yea and ſo,

A great truth.

as

as that I could vnfold it alſo, to others; in ſuch ſort, as that men were amazed at it; and my ſelf more, then anie of my Ghoſtlie Fathers; becauſe I vnderſtood mine owne dulnes, better then they. Nor is it anie long time, ſince this hapned to me; and ſo I procure not to know thoſe things, which our Lord hath not taught me, but I only conſider, and take care of them, ſo farre, as whereby my Conſcience may be concerned.

I returne yet once againe, to aduiſe, and declare, that it will import vs very much, not to * eleuate, and raiſe our Spirit, vnleſſe our Lord be pleaſed to eleuate, and raiſe it; which if he doe, it will inſtantly be vnderſtood; and eſpecially, this is more dangerous for woemen; for, the Diuel may bring ſome illuſion vpon them; though yet withall, I hold it for very certaine, that our Lord will not permitt, that the Diuel ſhould be able to hurt anie ſuch perſon, as ſhall procure to approach his Diuine Maieſtie with Humilitie; but rather that he ſhall be able, to giue himſelf more aduantage, and profit, by that, whereby the Diuel meant to deſtroy him. But now, in regard, that this way of beginners, in the exerciſe of Mentall Prayer, is more beaten, and becauſe the admonitions, which I haue giuen, import much, I haue enlarged my ſelf, thus farr; though yet, others will certainly haue written much better of it. But thus much doe I confeſſe; and I haue expreſſed my ſelf heerin, with abundance of confuſion, and ſhame, though yet ſtill, not with ſo much, as

* *A dangerous, & prouud, foolish errour.*

as I ought to haue had. Let our Lord be euer Blessed for all, since he permits, and is pleased, that so miserable a Creature, as I, should speake of things, belonging to his Diuine Maiestie; and those things, such, and so high.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

She proceeds in this First Degree, and State of Prayer; and giues aduise against some temptations, vvhich the Diuel is sometimes vvont to bring. This Discourse is very profitable.

I Haue thought fitt, to speake heer, of certaine temptations, which I haue found, to be brought against some, in their beginning, to vse Mentall Prayer; and some I haue felt my self; and I will also giue some aduise, which I hold to be necessarie, heerin. Let therefore a * beginner procure, to goe-on with great alacritie, and Libertie of Spirit; for, there be some, who are apt to thinke, that all their deuotion is instantly to vanish, if they doe neuer so little amisse, therein. It is true, that it will be very fitt, to continue in a holie doubt, and feare, of themselues, that so they may not be confident at all, to put themselues into anie occasion, wherein our Lord is wont to be offended; for it will euer be very necessarie, to vse this actual diligence, till one be very entire, in the

Obserue the generous vvay of this great Saint.

the possession of vertue; and there are not manie, who may be so very confident of themselues, as that, in such occasions, which haue * conformitie with their naturall disposition, and inclination, they may be out of care, and feare. And, in fine, it will euer be fitt, that so long, as we shall liue, in this world, we consider our miserable nature; though it were but euen for the continuall exercise of humilitie; but there are manie times, when it is permitted, as I haue sayd, to be taking recreation, though it were but to enable vs the better, to returne the more encouraged, and fortifyed, towards the making of Prayer. In all things, it will euer be needfull, to vse discretion; and withall, to haue great confidence, in God; for it is, by no meanes, fitt, to goe lessning, & diminishing our desires, but to belieue of Almightie God, that, if we will endeauour earnestly; by little and little, we may, by the fauour of his Diuine Maiestie, ariue, though it be not presently, where manie Saints haue ariued; who, if they had neuer resolued to aspire to Perfection, and had not also endeauoured, by little and little, to acquire it, would neuer haue been able, to obtaine so high a State. His Diuine Maiestie, is a very great friend, and fauourer of * couragious Soules; so that withall, they proceed with Humilitie, & not with anie confidence, in themselues; and I haue yet neuer seen anie one of this kinde, who hath continued to remaine in a very inferiour degree, in this way; nor neuer also, anie one cowardlie Soule

* *Note this very vvell.*

* *A great praise of a large hart.*

(though yet withall, it had the safegarde of Humilitie) which was able to make so much way, in manie yeares, as I haue found those others doe, in very few. I am euen amazed, when I consider, how much it workes in this kinde, for one to animate himself, towards the doing of great things; though instantly he may, perhaps, not haue force, wherewith to performe. For, the Soule puts her self to make a Flight, and ariues to be, in a high place, though yet, like some young Bird, she be not so well feathered yet; and therefore, as being wearie, she can but pause, and houer. In former time, I often remembred, and considered, what S. Paul affirmes of himself, Namely, *That he could doe all things, in God, vvho comforted him*; for, as for me, I knew well, that I could doe nothing of my self. But, that Saying of his, did me very much good; & so also, did this other of S. Augustin: *Giue me, O Lord, vvhat thou commandest; and then command me, vvhat thou vvilt.* And, for my part, I thought also manie times, that S. Peter had lost nothing by the bargaine, when he cast himselfe headlõg into the Sea though yet he were afrayd, afterward. In a word, these first strong purposes, and resolutions, are a great matter, though yet, in this First Degree, and State, it is fitt, that we goe detaining our selues, and hold our selues fast tyed, to the discretion, and disposing of a Directour; but then, we must procure, that he may be such an one, as will not teach vs, to leape heauily, and dully, like certaine Toades; nor be content, that our Soules dispose themselues, to

hunt,

hunt, those little weake beasts, called Lizards; Only Humilitie must euer goe before, that so we may be sure to vnderstand, that this strength doth not grow from our selues.

But heer, it will be necessarie for vs, to know, what kinde of Humilitie, this of ours, must be; and I am very apt to thinke, that the Diuel does much hurt, towards the making such, as exercise Prayer, not to aduance themselues very much, in their way, by causing them to mis-vnderstand Humilitie; and by procuring to make vs belieue, that it is but a kinde of pride, to haue Heroicall desires; and to pretend, to imitate Saints; and to desire, to be Martyrs. For, vpon this, he tells vs, and makes vs thinke, that the actions of Saints, are fitt to be admired, but not to be imitated, by vs, who are Sinners. This doe I also say, as well as he; only we must consider, what, in particular, is fitt for *admiration; and what, for imitation. For it would be no way conuenient, that a person, who were sick, and weake, should put himself, vpon great Fasts, and sharp Pennances; or should betake himself to the Wildernes, where he might neither be able to sleep, nor yet could get, what to eate; or the like. But yet, we ought to thinke, that we may well endeauour earnestly, by God's Fauour, to hold the world, in great contempt; and not to esteem earthlie honour; and not to remaine tyed-vp to the care of riches. But we really, haue harts so very poore, and straight, that it seemes to vs, as if we could not haue ground

* *How Saynts are to be imitated; & how, admired.*

enough, to goe vpon, if once we ſhould lay the care of our Bodie, neuer ſo little aſide, to giue it, to the Soule.

It ſeemes therefore heer already, that, euen for the better enioying of Recollection, it will be good, that we be in no want of neceſſarie things; for, anie kinde of care, will be able to diſquiet men, in Prayer. And I am hartily ſorry, that we ſhould haue ſo little confidence in God, and ſo much loue of our ſelues, as that we ſhould be diſquieted, by this thought. But the truth is, that, whereſoeuer men haue made ſo ſmall progreſſe, as this, in the way of Spirit, certaine fooleries, will trouble ſome, as much, as greater, and more ſubſtantiall matters, will doe others; and yet ſtill (in our way of vnderſtanding) we will needs preſume our ſelues, to be Spirituall perſons. It ſeemes to me, that this kinde of way of proceeding, ſhewes a deſire in them, to put the Bodie, and Minde, into ſuch a concurrence, and correſpondence, as that we would faine finde meanes, to take our eaſe in this world, and yet enioy God, in the next; and that conceipt will proue to be true, if we liue according to Iuſtice, and continue, to ſtick cloſe to Vertue; but yet ſtill, this is but the pace of a Henn, and it will neuer be able to bring vs on, to enioy true Libertie of Spirit. This ſeemes, indeed, to be a good way of proceeding, for ſuch as are in ſtate of Marriage, who are to carrie themſelues, according to their Vocation; but for anie other ſtate, then that, I doe, by no meanes, deſire,

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anie such kinde of profiting in Spirit, as this; nor shall they euer make me beleiue, that it is a good one; for I haue tryed it, long enough; and I had euer continued, in that way, if our Lord, through his infinit goodnes, had not shewed me another, and a shorter cutt; though yet withall, it be true, that I had euer great desires; but I procured (as I haue sayd) to vse Prayer; though yet still, to liue withall, at my pleasure. But really, I conceaue, that if anie bodie would haue encouraged me, to flye a higher pitch, I should haue striuen hard, to make those desires, proue deeds. But alas, it is true, that through our Sinnes, there are so very few, and may so quickly be counted, who haue anie more discretion, then is necessarie, for such occurrences, as these, that, I beleiue, it is a great part of the cause, why such, as are beginners, can get no faster on, towards great perfection; for, our Lord doth neuer faile, on his part; but it is we, who are still the faultie, and miserable Creatures.

They may also be able, to imitate the Saints; in procuring to vse Solitude, and keep Silence; and to exercise manie other vertues, which; will yet, by no meanes, murder this miserable Bodie, which they desire to preserue, with such curiositie, & care, though it should turne to the disorder of the Soule. And now, the Diuel is carefull enough, to helpe to render vs the more vnable; for, when he sees but a little inordinate feare, he desires no more, then to make vs apprehend, that euerie thing, will be apt to kill vs; or at least, to

depriue vs of our health; yea and if we be accuſtomed to haue teares, he will put vs into a feare, that we ſhall be blinde. My ſelf haue paſſed by this Walke, & therefore I know it; and I know withall, that I cannot tell what better kinde of life, or health, we can poſſibly deſire, then to looſe them both, vpon ſuch an occaſion. My ſelf, being ſo ſicklie as I was, till I reſolued to make no account at all, of my health, and of my bodie, was euer tyed vp, and was good for nothing; and euen now, it is very little, which I can doe. But yet, as ſoone as our Lord was pleaſed, that I ſhould vnderſtand this deceipt, and trick of the Diuel, if he obiected to me, my loſſe of health, I told him, it imported little, that I muſt dye; If he tempted me with loue of reſt, and eaſe, I told him, that it was not eaſe which I needed now, but the ſufferance of a Croſſe; And ſo alſo, in other things. For I ſaw clearly, that, in very manie, it was either a temptation of the Diuel, or mine owne lazines; though yet, in verie deed, I be ſicklie enough. But howſoeuer, I now enioy much better health, ſince I am not ſo very curious, and daintie, as I was, then I did before. And it is therefore of great importãce, for them, who beginne to hold Mentall Prayer, that they doe not ſubtilize too much, with their thoughts. And let them belieue me heerin; for I know it by experience; and perhaps it may be of good vſe, for me, to recount my faults, that ſo, others may take warning by me.

There is alſo another temptation, and it is very

vſuall,

vsuall; To desire, forsooth, that euerie bodie might grow to be very Spirituall, when once themselues beginne, to tast of this great Quiet; & how much, is to be gained by this meanes. It is not an ill thing, to desire it; but to procure it, may peraduenture not be good; vnlesse much discretion, and, as it were, dissimulation, be vsed, in doing it so, as that they seem not, to take vpon them, to teach; for, such as will procure to doe good, vpon their neighbours, in such cases as this, had need haue their owne vertues very strong; least els, they breed temptation for others. It hapned iust thus to me, and therefore I vnderstand it; that when (as I was saying) I procured, that others might vse Mentall Prayer, and on the one side, they heard me speake of high matters, and of the great benefit, which it brought, to vse that exercise; and when they saw, on the other, how very poore I was, in point of vertue, I occasioned them to be tempted, and disordered; and they were so, with reason enough; and themselues told me as much, afterward. For they knew not, how it was possible, for one of those things, to be compatible with the other; and it caused them not to thinke that, to be ill, which yet, indeed, was so; because, forsooth, they saw me doe it sometimes, when they held a good opinion of me. And this doth the Diuel effect, who, it seemes, can serue his turne, euen of the vertues, which we haue; that so, he may, the better, grow to authorize the mischeif, which he desires to doe vs; and how little soeuer that be, in

it ſelf, yet when that is done, in a Communitie, he gaines very much, by the bargaine; and how much more, when that, which I did ill, was very ill. And ſo, in manie yeares, there were only three perſons, who tooke benefit, by what I told them; and, when our Lord was already pleaſed, to beſtow more ſtrength of vertue vpon me, they were manie, who profited by me, euen in two or three yeares; as I will ſhew afterward.

Beſides, there is this other great inconuenience, that the Soule looſes her progreſſe in vertue; for the cheif thing, which ſhe is to procure at firſt, is only to take care of her ſelfe alone; and to make account, that there is not, in the whole world, anie one thing, but God, and She. And this is a certaine point, which imports the ſame Soule, very much.

There is alſo yet another temptation (and all, ſuch as this, ſhew themſelues euer, with a kinde of zeale of vertue; and they are fitt to be vnderſtood; and that we walke with much circumſpection) and this is a trouble, which men receiue, from the defects, and faults, which they diſcerne, in others. For, the Diuel procures to make vs believe, that this greif is entertained by vs, but only, becauſe we would not haue them offend Almightie God; and that forſooth, we are troubled, becauſe his honour is intereſſed thereby; and then it comes preſently in, that we would faine procure to redreſſe it; and this care diſquiets vs ſo much, that it hinders our Prayer; yea and the greateſt miſcheif of all, is, that we thinke, that this is vertue,

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and perfection, and great zeale of God's seruice. I speake not of those afflictions, which publique Sinnes must giue, when they are vsually committed by a Community, or when they grow to be of preiudice to the Church; as these Heresies doe, whereby we finde so manie Soules to be lost; for this is a very good affliction, and trouble; and, in regard, that it is so good, it disorders not, and disturbs not him, who hath it. But * the secure way, for that Soule, which desires to giue it self to Prayer, is to seek to forget, both all things, and all persons; and to attend, to keep all reckonings streight with her self; and so, to giue contentment to Almightie God. Now, this is both very conuenient, and important; and if I should stand to tell you, what errours I haue seen fall-out to be committed, vpon the confidence, which men haue put in their good intentions, I should neuer make an end. Let vs therefore alwaies procure, to consider the vertues, and good workes, which we shall discerne in others; and to shut our eyes, from seeing their defects, by the consideration of our owne great Sinnes. Now, this is a kinde of working, wherein, though we ariue not instantly, to doe it with perfection, yet we come thereby, to gaine a great vertue, which is, to hold euerie bodie better, then ourselues; and we beginne, to get it, through the Fauour of Almightie God, whereof we haue need, in all things. For, whensoeuer that is wanting to vs, all other diligences, serue to little purpose; and we must therefore humbly pray him,

* *Note this vvell.*

him, to bestow this grace, vpon vs, wherein certainly, he will not be wanting, if we be as carefull, as we ought. Let them also consider well of this aduise, who vse to discourse much, with the Vnderstanding; and haue power to draw manie considerations, and conceipts, out of some one. For, as for them, who are not able to worke with this Facultie (as I can not) there is no cause of giuing them this aduise; but only, that they will be content, to haue patience, till our Lord shall be pleased, to helpe them to matter, vpon which to worke; and light, wherewith to know, how to doe it; Since they are able, to performe so little, for themselues, as that their Vnderstanding part, doth rather giue them trouble, then help.

But, returning now to such others, as are able to serue themselues of Discourse, they must take care, that their whole time, be not spent in that; for, howsoeuer it be very meritorious, yet, conconsidering how sauourie a thing, they conceaue, that Mentall Prayer should be, they feare, that they shall neuer liue, to see Sunday, nor anie Season, wherein they are not to labour, and drudge; and therefore, they presently thinke, that all their hopes are lost; though, for my part, I conceaue, that all that Losse, is Gaine. But let them,* as I haue sayd, represent themselues, as in the presence of Christ our Lord; and, without wearying of the Vnderstanding, be speaking, and regaling themselues, with him; and not tire their witts, to finde out, and frame certaine Discourses; but

* *A necessary Aduise.*

but let them only preſent their neceſſities, and the reaſon, which he may haue, not ſo much as to endure them, there. Some one of theſe conſiderations will ſerue, at one time; and ſome other, at an other; that ſo the Soule may not be wearie, of feeding alwaies vpon one diſh.

Theſe particulars, are both very guſtfull, and very profitable alſo, if once the Partie be accuſtomed to feed on them; for they vſe to bring great ſupport, and ſtrength, for the life of the Soule, & manie aduãtages alſo, otherwiſe. I will declare my ſelfe further vpon this matter; becauſe all theſe points, concerning Prayer, carrie their difficulties along with them; and, vnleſſe there be a good Directour, at hand, they are very hard to be vnderſtood. And this is the verie cauſe, why, though I would faine make ſhort, and that iuſtly, (becauſe it would ſuffice for me, but euen to touch them, by reaſon of the great capacitie of him, who commanded me to write theſe particulars, of Prayer,) yet my dulnes, is not able to declare, & explicate, in few words, a thing, which it ſo much imports, to be well vnderſtood. And, becauſe I ſuffered ſo very much, by vſing only Bookes, when I beganne the exerciſe of Prayer, I haue compaſſion of all them, who doe ſo too; for it is no leſſe then ſtrange, to ſee, how farr otherwiſe Bookes are wont to be vnderſtood, then men ſee they ought to haue been, when once they come, to haue had experience of theſe things.

But now (to returne to what I was ſaying) let

vs

vs put our ſelues, to conſider ſome paſſage of the Paſſion of our Bleſſed Lord; and, for example, let it be that, when he was tyed to the Pillar. And heer, let the Vnderſtanding ſearch-out the cauſe of thoſe great dolours, and afflictions, which his Diuine Maieſtie felt, in that Solitude of his; as alſo, vpon manie other things, which, (if the Vnderſtanding be good at working; or els, if he haue Learning) he may eaſily be able, to fetch from thence. And this is a manner of Prayer, wherein all Creatures may both beginne, and proceed, and make an end; and it will be a very excellent, and ſecure way, till our Lord, may, perhaps, carrie them on, to other things, which are ſupernaturall. I ſay, for all; though yet there be manie Soules, which profit more, by other Meditations, then by that of the Sacred Paſſion. For, as there are manie Manſions in Heauen, when a Soule is there: ſo are there alſo manie wayes thither. Some, profit more, by conſidering Heauen; and ſome, afflict themſelues beſt, by thinking of Hell; others, by reflecting vpon Death; and ſome, if they be very tender-harted, are too much troubled, and vexed, if they alwaies goe ruminating vpon the Paſſion; and they regale themſelues better, yea, and they alſo profit more, by conſidering the Power, and Greatnes of Almightie God, in his Workes; and the Loue, he beares vs; which they finde to be repreſented to them, in all his Creatures. And this is an admirable way of proceeding, though yet ſtill, we muſt neither

forget,

forget, nor forbeare, to consider the Life, and Passion of our Blessed Lord, very often; that, in fine, being the verie thing, from which, all our good, both euer did, and euer can ariue to vs.

He, who is a Beginner, had need be carefull, to consider very well, what that is, whereby he profits most; and to this purpose, he will haue great need of a Directour, if he can meet with an experienced man; for if he be not so, in good measure, he may chance err, by carrying a Soule on, without either vnderstanding her, himself; or els, giuing her to be vnderstood, by the Partie. For, as the Partie cannot but know, of how great merit it is, for him, to subiect himself to a Directour: so he will not presume, to depart from that, which the other shall direct. I haue mett with certaine Soules, which haue been afflicted, and deiected, and streightned, because he, who had the instructing them, wanted experience; and I was hartily sorrie for them; And some also I haue seen, who knew not, what to doe with themselues; for they, not vnderstanding matter of Spirit, afflicted themselues, both in Bodie, and Soule; and, the while, were sure enough, not to benefit others. One of them told me once, of a Directour of hers, who would not suffer her, in eight yeares togeather, to passe on, out of the consideration of the knowledge of her self; and yet our Lord had her then, in the condition, and degree of Quiet Prayer; but so, she was in trouble enough. And, though it be very true, that this point

point of the *knowledge of ones self*, is neuer, indeed, to be vtterly giuen ouer; nor is anie Soule in the way of Prayer, to thinke, she hath so much of the Gyant in her, as not to vnderstand, that manie times, she must turne Child, and suck againe; and this must neuer be forgotten; and perhaps, I shall also speake often of it againe, in regard, that it imports so much; because there is no State of Prayer so high, wherein it will not be necessarie, to turne-againe often, to the beginning. And this point of the knowledge of our selues, and of our Sinnes, is the daily * bread, which must be eaten, with all the meate (how delicate soeuer it may be) of such, as are in this way of Prayer; yea and without this verie bread, they will neuer be able, to support, and strengthen themselues; yet must euen this, be taken, by weight, and measure. For, when once a Soule findes her self layd very flatt, and low; and sees clearly, that she hath no good thing of her owne; and findes her self to be full of confusion, and shame, so much as to appeare in the presence of so great a King; and the little, which she is able to pay him, for the very much, which she findes her self, to owe him; what necessitie is there, to spend so very much time, vpon this, without applying our selues to such other things, as our Lord may, perhaps, set before vs, and which it will not be reason for vs, to leaue; since his Diuine Maiestie knowes better, then we, vpon what, it is conuenient for vs to feed.

* *Our daily Bread.*

So

So that it imports vs very much, that the * Directour be well aduiſed, & I meane alſo, that he be of good vnderſtanding, and experience; and if, with this, he be alſo learned, it will be of mightie importance. But yet ſtill, when all theſe three parts ſhall not chance, to meet togeather, in the ſame man, the two former qualities of theſe three, will fall out, to import more, then the third, becauſe they may eaſily procure to conſult with ſuch as are learned, whenſoeuer they ſhall haue need thereof; but as for Beginners, learned men, if they poſſeſſe not the vſe of Prayer, can be of little profit to them. Yet I ſay not, that they ſhould not treat, and conferr with ſuch men, as are learned; for, as for hauing a Spirit, which ſhould not be firſt ſetled in a way of truth, for my part, I had rather haue it without Prayer. For, Learning is a great matter, ſince it inſtructs vs, who know little; and brings vs light; and when we approach neer to the truths of Holie Scripture, we beginne to doe that, which we ought; but as for ſillie, and fooliſh deuotions, our Lord deliuer vs from them. I will declare my ſelf yet better; for I feare, I put my ſelf vpon too manie things at once, though I euer wanted meanes, to know, how to giue my ſelf to be well vnderſtood, (as I haue ſayd) but vpon the expence of manie words.

* *A deſcription of a good Directour in matter of Spirit.*

A Religious Woeman, for examples ſake, will beginne to vſe Prayer; and in caſe ſome ſillie kinde of man, direct, and gouerne her, he will, if the

the toy take him in the head, giue her to vnderſtand, that it is better for her, to obey him, then her Superiour; yea, and he will doe it, without anie malice, at all; as conceauing, that he is in the right. And now ſhe being a Religious woeman, will be likelie enough, to thinke, that he ſayes true. And if ſhe be a married woeman, he will tell her, that it is beſt for her, euen when ſhe ought to be about her Houſe-hold buſineſſes, to exerciſe her ſelf in Prayer; though it were to be, to the diſguſt of her huſband. So that, ſhe knowes not, how to diſpoſe of her time, nor of her buſineſſes, in ſuch ſort, as that all may goe, according to reaſon, and truth; becauſe, in fine, that Directour wants light; and not hauing any himſelf, he cannot giue it to others, though he would neuer ſo faine. And though, in order to this end, it ſeem, that there is no great need of Learning; yet as for me, my opinion both is, and euer will be, that all Chriſtians ſhall doe well, to treat with ſuch men, about their Soules, as are well learned; and ſo much the more, ſo much the better; and they, who goe by the way of Prayer, haue yet more need, then others, to meet with ſuch men; and ſo, the more they ſhall be alſo Spirituall, the better will it be for them, ſtill. And let not folkes deceaue themſelues, with ſaying, That, learned men, without the exerciſe of Prayer, are not to the purpoſe, for them, who vſe Prayer; for I haue dealt with manie; and for ſome of theſe latter yeares, I haue endeauoured it the more, becauſe

becauſe then, I found my ſelf in more neceſſitie. But I was euer, much a freind of learned men; for, though ſome of them haue not experience, yet they hate not Spirituall people, nor are not ignorant, what theſe things meane; becauſe they euer find this truth, that there is ſuch a thing, as a good Spirit, by holie Scripture, wherein they are continually verſed. And, as for me, I hold, that a perſon, who exerciſes Prayer, and will treat with learned men, ſhall neuer be deceaued, by illuſions of the Diuel, if he haue not a minde, to deceaue himſelf. For I belieue, that the Diuel is mightily afrayd of Learning, whenſoeuer it is accompanied with Humilitie, and Vertue; for he knowes, that he ſhall be diſcouered, in the end, and that ſo, he ſhall come to looſe, by the bargaine.

And now I haue ſayd thus much, becauſe I know, there are opinions, that learned men, are not fitt, for perſons of Prayer, vnleſſe they be alſo of Spirit. Already I haue ſignifyed, that it would be neceſſarie, to haue a Spirituall Directour; but if he proue not to be learned, the inconuenience will be great; & yet it will be of much help, to treat with learned men, ſo that they be vertuous; for, though they be not Spirituall (as, in this caſe, we vnderſtād Spirituall) they will yet, be able to benefit vs; and God will vouchſafe to enable them, to teach vs; yea, and ſo, may perhaps, by degrees, grow euen to make them alſo become Spirituall; to the end, that they may be able, to inſtruct vs, the better.

And I speake not this, without some tryall; for, the occasion hath hapned to me, with more, then two. I say therefore, that if a Soule resolue to render it self, to be entirely subiect to the order of anie one Directour, she shall err very much, vnlesse she procure, in particular manner, that he be learned; especially if he be a Religious man of anie Order. Because such an one, is to be subiect to his Prelate, or Superiour; and in that case, peraduenture, all those three aforesayd parts, which were sayd to be so necessarie, for a Directour, will be wanting to him, which will be no little crosse to the Partie; besides, that he may perhaps find himself, to haue voluntarily submitted his Vnderstanding, to that of another man, who hath no very good one, himself. At least, forasmuch as concernes me, I was neuer able, to bring my self to it; nor indeed, doe I hold it conuenient.

But now, if the Partie, of whome we speake, be a Secular person, let him blesse Almightie God, that himself may make choice of that man, to whome he will resolue to subiect himself; and let him take care, not to loose this vertuous libertie. Nay, let him euen stay, without anie Directour at all, till he find a fitt one; for, our Lord will not faile to prouide him such an one, if he goe wholy grounded in Humilitie, and with desire, to make a fitt choice. For my part, I praise a fitt Directour very much; and woemen, and such men also, as are not learned, were alwaies to giue God infinit

thankes,

thankes, for that there are some, in the world, who take so great paines, and trouble, to obtaine the knowledge of truth; whereof such as be not learned, are ignorant. And it amazes me, manie times, to see Religious men, who are learned; and particularly to consider, with how much trouble, they grew to gaine all that knowledge, which is to bring me so much profit, without anie more trouble of mine, then only to aske them the question; and yet, that we should not benefit our selues by it. But, let not God permit, that still it should continue, to be so. For I see them subiect, to the troubles, and mortifications of a Religious Life, which are very great; with Pennances; with ill Diet; with hard Lodging; with being subiect, in all things, to Obedience; and, in fine, I so perceaue, that all is affliction, and all, Crosse, that really, the thought thereof, doth cast me sometimes, into confusion; and, me thinkes, it must be a great miserie, that anie bodie should loose so important a benefit, by his owne fault. It is possible, that some of vs, who are free from these austerities, whereof I speake (or at least, if we feed vpon them, we will needs haue them finely dressed, after our owne fancie, and so will liue, as we list ourselues) conceaue, that, for the making a little more Prayer, we shall out-stripp them, who yet are subiect to so great Pennance. Blessed be thou, O Lord, who hast made me so vnprofitable, and vn-vsefull; but yet, I praise thee, after an extraordinarie manner, in regard, that

thou awakeſt ſo very manie, who may awake vs. And we ſhould doe well, to make very continuall Prayer, for them, who giue vs light; for, what would become of vs, without them, in the midſt of ſo great tempeſts, as are now in the Church? If ſome men haue been wicked; the good will ſhine the brighter, by their meanes. I beſeech our Lord, to hold them vp, with his hand, that he may help ſuch, as help vs; Amen.

I haue trauailed farr out of the way, from that, which I was going to ſay; but, all will ſerue the turne, for beginners; to the end, that they may ſo, put themſelues vpon this high way, that it may alſo proue to them, a true way. Returning therefore, to what I ſayd, of * meditating vpon Chriſt our Lord at the Pillar, it is good to diſcourſe a while, and to thinke, vpon the paine, which he felt there, and why he felt it; and who it is, that felt it; and the Loue wherewith he felt it; yet let not the Partie wearie himſelf, by going about to ſeeke all this, but let him remaine ſtill there, with a calme, and quiet kinde of vnderſtanding. If he can, let him employ himſelf, vpon cõſidering, who lookes vpon him; and let him accompanie him; and beg of him; and humble himſelf before him; and regale himſelf with him; and, in fine, let him remember, that our Lord deſerued not to be there. Whenſoeuer you ſhall be able to doe this, though it ſhould fall out to be at the verie beginning of your Prayer, you will find great benefit by it; nay, manie benefits are acquired, by this manner of

* *Note.*

of Prayer; and, at leaſt, my Soule found it ſo. I know not, whether I hitt right, in declaring my ſelf; but your Reuerence will conſider of that; and I beſeech our Bleſſed Lord, that I may hitt right, in euerlaſtingly pleaſing him; Amen.

THE FOVRTEENTH CHAPTER.

She beginnes to declare the Second Degree of Prayer, vvherein our Lord is already pleaſed, to giue the Soule more particular guſts; vvhich she relates, to the end, that she may make them be vnderſtood, to be Supernaturall. This Diſcourſe is very much to be noted.

SInce now it is already declared, with how much labour, this Orchard is watered; and how, by the ſtrength of the arme, the Water is to be gotten out of the Well; we muſt ſay ſomewhat of that Second way, of drawing-vp this Water, which the Lord of the Garden hath ordained; that ſo, by this artifice of the Wheele, with thoſe little Buckets, which belong to it, the Gardner may draw out more water, and with leſſe trouble; and may be able, to reſt, now and then; and not be continually in labour. Now, this way being applyed to Prayer, which is wont to be called Quiet Prayer, is that, whereof now, I will treat.

The Soule doth heer beginne, to recollect, and, as it were, shut it self vp. And it touches a little heer, vpon the Supernaturall; because the Powers thereof, can, by no meanes, gaine this, for it self, by all the diligences, which it can possibly vse. It is true, that sometimes, she may seem to haue wearied her self, in going round about the Turne, and to haue laboured hard, with the Vnderstanding; and so to haue filled-vp the little Bucketts; but heer, the Water is growne-vp to be higher; and so she labours much less, then she did, in drawing it out of the Well. I say, the Water is growne neerer to her; because Grace giues it self now, to be more clearly knowne, by the Soule. This is a kind of recollecting, and, as it were, a shutting-vp of the Powers of the Soule, into her self, that so she may be able to enioy the contentment, which then, she hath, with more gust. But yet, the vse of the Faculties, is not lost, nor doe they sleep; but only the Will is employed, and possessed, in such sort, that it is growne to be captiued, though yet it self know not how; only it giues consent, that Almightie God may put it in Prison, as one, who vnderstands now, very well, how to let it self be made Prisoner, to whome it loues. O my deare Iesus, and my Lord! of how much worth, is thy loue to vs, in this case, since it holds our loue fast, in so strong chaines, that it leaues vs not euen libertie, at that instant, to loue anie other thing, then thy self? The other two Faculties, which are the Vnderstanding, and Memorie,

morie, are then assisting the Will; to the end, that they may goe enabling it, to enioy so great a good; although now and then, it happen, that, howsoeuer, they be euen thus vnited to the Will, they yet, are apt enough, sometimes, to dis-assist it, much. But in this case, let not the Will make any great account of that, but remaine still, in her quietnes, and ioy. For, * if she shall persist, in resoluing to recollect those other Faculties to herself, both they, and she, will loose, by the bargaine. For, they are then, as so manie Doues, who cõtent not themselues, with the food, or baite, which the Lord of the Doue-House presents, without their labouring for it; but they goe to seek it, in other places; though yet they soone grow to finde it so bad, that they quickly returne againe; and so, come, and goe, to see, whether the Will, may be brought to bestow anie part of that, vpon them, which it enioyes. And, if our Lord please to cast them anie food, they stay; and if not, they goe againe, to seeke it; and all this while, they conceaue, that they are euen of vse, and benefit, to the Will it self; though yet sometimes, both the Memorie, and Imagination (euen whilst they haue a desire, to represent that, better to her, which she enioyes) fall-out to doe her hurt, in stead of good. Let her therefore be content, to carrie her self so, towards them, as I shall heer aduise; since all that, which passes heer, is of extreame consolation, and is obtained with so little labour, that Prayer neuer wearies one heer, though it chance to last, very

* *How the Will is to carry it selfe to the other Faculties of the Minde.*

long; becauſe the Vnderſtanding goes working now, at great leaſure; and walkes, as it were, foot by foot; and brings-vp another manner of quantitie of water, then formerly, it drew out of the Well; and the teares, which God giues, in this caſe, come already with very great ioy; which, howſoeuer we feele, yet we procure them not.

*The bleſsings of Quiet Prayer.

This * Water of the Well, which imports the great Bleſſings, and Fauours, which our Bleſſed Lord ſhewes vs heer, makes our vertues encreaſe, incomparably more, then that other of the former Degree of Prayer, did; becauſe now, the Soule is already beginning, to get vp away, from her owne miſerie; and already, ſhe growes to be allowed, to haue ſome ſmall notice, euen of the guſts of glorie. And this, I thinke, makes her thriue, and improue ſo much the more; as alſo, becauſe, by this time, ſhe is growne to approach neerer to that vertue, and power, from whence all vertues proceed, which is Almightie God; becauſe his Diuine Maieſtie doth not only then, communicate himſelf, to that Soule; but he is alſo pleaſed, that ſhe ſhould find, in what ſort it is, that he communicates himſelf to her. In ariuing once to this place, ſhe inſtantly beginnes to looſe the appetite of all things, concerning this world; and I cannot blame her; for already, ſhe ſees very clearly, that one moment of that guſt, is not to be purchaſed heer; and that no riches, nor dominions, nor all the honours, nor delights of this world, are able to giue ſuch contentment, and ſatis-

ſatisfaction, as this, though it were but for the twinkling of an eye; becauſe this, is true contentment, and ſuch an one, as we really ſee, and find, to content vs indeed. For, as for thoſe others of this world, it may well goe for a wonder, if we can ſo much as tell, euen wherein the contentment of anie thing doth conſiſt. Nor doth there euer faile to be a kind of meaſuring caſt, between the Yea, and the No, in anie of them; but heer, all is in the Affirmatiue, and profeſſes to ſay Yea, as long as it laſts; and the No, comes not in, till afterward; becauſe then, they ſee, that the buſines is growne to be, at an end; and that he cannot recouer it againe; nor knowes, indeed, how to goe about it. For, though he ſhould euen halfe kill himſelfe with doing Pennance, and making much Prayer, and vſe, in fine, all other poſſible diligences; yet will it all ſerue to very little purpoſe, vnleſſe our Lord vouchſafe to impart it. But, Almightie God is pleaſed heer, for his owne greatnes, that this Soule ſhould now vnderſtand, that his Diuine Maieſtie, vouchſafes to be ſo neer her, that now, there is no need of ſending anie meſſengers to her, but only, that ſhe her ſelf, may ſpeake with him; though yet, not by word of mouth, becauſe then, he is already ſo neer her, that he vnderſtands her (as a man may ſay) euen by the verie leaſt ſtirring of her lipps.

But now, it may chance ſeem to ſome, to be impertinent for me, to talke after this manner; in regard, the world knowes well enough, that our

Lord doth euer heare vs, & is euer preſent with vs; and there can be no doubt at all, but that this is true. But yet heer, this Emperour, and Lord of ours, is pleaſed, that we ſhould alſo vnderſtand, that he vnderſtands vs; and what his preſence is able to doe; & what he will particularly beginne to worke in our Soules; and the great, both interiour, and exteriour ſatisfaction, which he imparts; and the mighty difference, which (as I haue ſayd) there is, between this kind of delight, and guſt, and all the other, of this world. For, this ſeemes euen to fill, all thoſe hollow, and voyd places, which our Sinnes had made in our Soules. And this ſo great ſatisfaction, is in the very moſt intimate part thereof; and ſhe knowes not how, nor by what meanes alſo, it comes; nay, manie times, ſhe cannot tell, euen what to doe, nor what to aske, no nor what to wiſh. For, the Soule ſeemes there, to find all good things togeather; and ſhe doth not very well know, euen what ſhe hath found; nor yet, can I tell, how to giue it to be vnderſtood. For there would heer, be need of Learning, for manie purpoſes; and heer, would it come very well in, to giue to vnderſtand, the difference, betwixt Generall, and Particular Helps, or Succours of Grace, whereof manie are ignorant. And our Lord, in this Prayer, is pleaſed, that our Soule ſhould ſee this particular Succour, as it were, with her verie eyes; and manie other things alſo, which may perhaps be ill declared heer, by me; but, ſince vnderſtanding

perſons

persons are to see what I write, and who will know, if it haue anie errour in it (wherein I may easily be found faultie enough, through want, both of Learning, & Spirit) I am in the lesse paine, and care; considering, that this goes into the hands of such, as will both vnderstand it, & will blott also anie such thing out, as may haue been ill sayd.

Yet I would faine giue this to be vnderstood, because these, are the beginnings; and when our Lord disposes himselfe first, to doe these Fauours, the Soule herself doth not vnderstand them; nor doth she know, what to doe, with her self. For, if Almightie God conduct, and guide her, by the way of feare, as he did me, the trouble is very great; vnlesse there be some at hand, who can vnderstand her. But then, it is a great gust for her, to see her self well described, by them; for then, she euidently findes her self to be in that way; and it is also of great benefit, to know, what one hath to doe, in anie of these States, or Degrees, that so, they may goe profiting, on. For my part, I endured much, and lost a great deale of time, because I did not know, how to carry my selfe. And therefore I haue very great compassion of those Soules, which find themselues alone, when they are come thus farre; for though I haue read manie Spirituall Bookes, and though they touch vpon that, which is to the purpose, yet fall they very short, in declaring themselues; and, vnlesse the Soule be very well exercised in Prayer, she shall haue enough to doe, to vnderstand them, though they

they ſeeke to expreſſe themſelues, at large.

I could very much deſire, that our Lord would doe me the fauour, that I might know, how to ſet downe the effects, which theſe things, that grow already to be Supernaturall, vſe to worke in the Soule; to the end, that it might be vnderſtood, by them, when it is the Spirit of God. I ſay, that it might be vnderſtood; according to what we can thinke, we vnderſtand, in this world; though it will alwaies be very well done, to goe on, with circumſpection, and feare. For though it be indeed of God, yet the Diuel can tell, how to transforme himſelf ſometimes, into an Angel of Light; and, if a Soule be not well exerciſed in Prayer, she will not vnderſtand it well; and indeed, to be exerciſed well enough, to vnderſtand this point, as it deſerues, the Soule muſt be ariued, to the higheſt Degree of Prayer.

The little time I haue, will allow mee no great help, for what I am deſigneing; and therefore his Diuine Maieſtie, had need to doe it himſelf; for I muſt be ſtirring, vp, and downe, in the Communitie; & haue manie other buſineſſes to doe; ſince I am, at this preſent, in a Houſe, which is but beginning now, as I ſhall ſhew afterward; and therefore, I am writing this, without anie ſuch reſt, and quiet kind of being, as were conuenient; ſo that I muſt doe it, by little and little, and by fitts. But I could wish, I were now, at more leaſure; for, when our Lord giues a ſpirit, to doe a thing, it is eaſily, and much better ſet downe.

And

And it seemes to be, as when one hath an Originall, before him; and then he may easily take-out the Coppie. But, if the Spirit be wanting, there is no more power, and meanes, to make one word of this language suite well with an other, then if (as we may say) we would suite Spanish, and Turkish togeather, euen though we should haue exercised our selues, manie yeares, in Prayer; and therefore, me thinkes, it is of very great aduantage, when I write, if I be then, in state of Prayer; for I see clearly, that it is not I, who declare it, nor who doe either order it then, with my Vnderstanding, nor yet know afterward, how I declared it before; and this happens to me, very often.

But now, let vs goe-back to our Orchard, or Garden, and see, how these Trees beginne to button, and budd-out towards flowring, that they may afterward yeild fruit; and how these Gillie-flowers, and other odoriferous Plants, dispose themselues, to giue delight full Sent to the Owner. I confesse, that this Comparison regales, and pleases me much; for, manie times, in my beginnings (and I humbly beseech our Lord, that euen yet, I may haue been a beginner, to serue his Diuine Maiestie) I say, in those beginnings of that, which I shall say afterward, of my Life, it was of much delight to me, to consider, that my Soule was a Garden, and that our Lord walked in it, vp, and downe; and I humbly pray him, to encrease the odour of those little young Flowers

of

of Vertue, which shewed, in all apparance, that they would be glad, to find meanes to sprout; and that also, they might serue, for his Glorie; and that he would be pleased to sustaine them, since I desire nothing for my self; and that he would also dresse, and prune as manie of them, as he pleased; for already, I knew well enough, that they would thriue, and grow the better, afterward. I say, that he would cut, and prune them; in regard, that some such times ariue; now, and then, to the Soule, as wherein there is no apparance left of this Garden, at all; but then, all seemes to be withered, and dry, and that there neuer will come more Water, to sustaine it; yea, and that there also seemes, to haue neuer been anie vertue, in that Soule. In this case, it vndergoes great affliction; because our Lord is pleased, that the poore Gardner may cõceaue, that all that care is lost, which he had formerly employed, vpon sustaining, and improuing his Garden. But then comes in the time, of true plucking-vp, and rooting-out, all those little, paltrie hearbes, which, till then, had remained there, how little soeuer they might be; with making vs also know, that no diligence of ours will serue, if Almightie God take the Water of his Grace, from vs; that so, in fine, we may come to hold this poore miserable Nothing of ours, in no manner of account; yea, and, if the thing were possible, euen for lesse then Nothing. For heer, great Humilitie makes vs the gainers, since the Flowers will thus, grow to re-flourish.

O thou, my Lord, and my God! (for I know not, how to say this, without teares, and without a great Regalo, to this poore Soule of mine) is it possible, O my Lord, that thou art pleased to be thus amongst vs? Yea, and thou remainest in the B. Sacrament, which may well be, with all truth, belieued, because so it is; and we may, with much truth, make this Comparison; and, if it be not through our owne fault, we may enioy our selues, togeather with thee; yea, and thou dost also reioyce to be with vs, since thou declarest, *That it is thy delight, to be vvith the Children of men.* O my Lord, what is this? For, whensoeuer I heare but this word, it is to me, of great consolation; yea and was so, when I found my self in the worst condition. But is it possible, after this, O my deare Lord, that there should be, in the whole world, anie one Soule, which ariuing to receaue such Fauours, and Regalo's at thy hands, and vnderstanding, that thou reioycest so highly in her, should yet returne to offend thee, after the receauing of so manie Fauours, and so great demonstrations of the loue, thou bearest her; in such sort, as that they cannot possibly be doubted, since the effects doe so manifestly declare it. Yes, yes, it is most certaine, that there is such a Soule in the world, which hath offended thee; and that, not once, but often; yea, and I am this verie Soule. And I beseech thy Diuine Goodnes, O my Lord, that I may haue been, the onlie Creature, who euer committed so high a wickednes, and

who

who haue been guiltie, of ſuch an exceſſiue ingratitude againſt thee; though yet already, euen from this verie miſerie of mine, thy infinite goodnes, hath been able to draw ſome aduantage; yea, and euen by how much the ill hath been greater, the great benignitie of thy Mercies hath ſhined ſo much the more. But now, with how much reaſon, may I reſolue to celebrate them, for all eternitie? I moſt humbly beſeech thee, O my God, that it may be ſo; and that I may ſing praiſes to thee, for euer, ſince now, thou haſt vouchſafed to ſhew thy goodnes ſo highly, and ſo greatly, to me, that ſuch as ſee it, are amazed; and, as for me, they carrie me very often, euen out of my ſelf. And, if I ſhould once finde, that I were depriued of thee, I could be fitt, O my Lord, for nothing, but to returne, to be ſuch a kind of Garden, as that the Flowers being plucked-vp, yet once againe, this miſerable earth of mine, would returne to be a direct Dung-hill, as it was, before. To the end therefore, that I may praiſe thee the better, permitt not, I beſeech thee, O my Lord, that this Soule may euer grow to be loſt, which thou haſt bought with ſo manie afflictions of thine owne; and which thou haſt ſo often repurchaſed, againe, and againe, and taken, from out of the verie teeth, of that hideous Dragon of Hell.

I beſeech your Reuerence, excuſe me, for ſpeaking thus, from the purpoſe; and doe not wonder at it, ſince it is, at leaſt, to mine owne purpoſe, to ſpeake as I doe. For, it happens, according to thoſe appre-

apprehenſions, and reflections, which the Soule chances to make, when one writes. And ſometimes, it falls-out to be hard enough, to forbeare to celebrate the praiſes of Almightie God, when it happens, that the penn repreſents ſuch things, as expreſſe the high obligations, which we haue to his Diuine Maieſtie. And I beleeue, that this, will be, no way, diſpleaſing to your Reuerence; for I am of opinion, that we may, both of vs, doe very well, to ſing one Song, though yet, after a different manner; becauſe it is much more, which I owe to Almightie God, then you; in regard, that he hath pardoned me more Sinnes, as your Reuerence knowes very well.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER

She proſecutes her Diſcourſe of the ſame matter; and giues ſome aduiſe, hovv perſons are to carrie themſelues, in this kinde of Quiet Prayer. She treats, hovv manie Soules come to ariue to this Degree of Prayer; and that fevv paſſe beyond it. The particulars, vvhich are touched heer, are not only very profitable, but very neceſſarie.

LEt vs now returne to our purpoſe. This Quietnes, and Recollection of the Soule, is eaſily perceiued, by the ſatisfaction, and peace,

which is infuſed into her, with a very great contentment, and calmnes of the Powers of the ſayd Soule, togeather with a very great delight. And now it ſeemes to her (becauſe ſhe is not come yet anie further) that already ſhe hath nothing left to deſire; and that, with a very good will, ſhe could make the ſame ſuite with S. Peter, That her *aboade might be euer there.* She dares not ſtirr, or moue; nay ſhe would hardly giue her ſelf leaue, ſo much as to take her breath, for feare, leaſt ſo, that Good ſhould be flying away, out of her hands. And the while, the poore, little Soule vnderſtands not, that, as, by her owne power, ſhe could doe nothing, for the drawing of that good to her ſelf: ſo is ſhe of leſſe abilitie, to detaine it there, anie longer, then our Lord ſhall be pleaſed to grant it. I haue already declared, that in this firſt Recollection, and Quiet, the Powers, and Faculties of the Soule, are not wanting; but yet ſhe is ſo fully ſatisfyed with God, that, as long, as this occaſion laſts, howſoeuer thoſe two other Powers may diſcompoſe themſelues, yet, the Will remaining vnited with Almightie God, that Quiet, and calme reſt, is not loſt, but rather, by little and little, the Will againe recouers, and recollects the Vnderſtanding, and Memorie. For, howſoeuer the ſayd Will be not yet totally ingulfed, yet is ſhe ſo employed, without knowing how, that, how diligent ſoeuer they be, they know not how to depriue her, of her contentment, andioy; but rather ſhe goes helping

helping her self, without anie trouble at all, of her owne; to the end, that this little sparke of the Loue of Almightie God, may not be quenched in her.

I beseech our Lord to allow me grace, that I may giue this, to be well vnderstood; for, there are manie, and very manie Soules, which ariue to be in this Degree, or State; and few, which get beyond it; and I know not, who may be in fault thereof; only I am sure enough, that there is none, in Almightie God. For, since his Diuine Maiestie doth a Soule the Fauour, that she may be able to ariue to this point, I cannot beleiue, that he would cease, to carrie her much further, if it were not for some fault of her owne. But now it imports the same Soule very much, that, when she ariues thus farre, she may well vnderstand the great dignitie, wherein she is; and the great Fauours, which our Lord hath donne her; and how, in all good reason, she were no longer to be, as of the Earth; because it seemes now already, that his goodnes makes her an Inhabitant of Heauen, if it be not her fault; and wretched shall she be, if she turne back; and I beleiue, it would be then, to goe downe, low enough, whither I was going, if the mercie of our Lord had not made me turne yet back againe. For the most part, in my opinion, they giue ouer, for very greiuous faults of their owne; nor is it possible, for anie Creature, to quitt so great a good, without the * blindnes of being subiect to committ some very great ill. And

* No

therefore I humbly beſeech thoſe Soules, euen for the loue of our Lord, to whome his Maieſtie hath done ſo great a Fauour, as to make them able to reach this Degree, and State, that they will know themſelues; yea, and that they will hold themſelues in great account, with an humble, and holie preſumption, that ſo, they may neuer returne againe, to the Flesh-Potts of Egipt. And yet, that if through their weaknes, and wickednes, and through their naughtie, and miſerable condition, they should chance to fall back, as I did, they will euer be yet repreſenting to themſelues, the great good, which they haue loſt; and that alſo, they will grow into ſuſpicion of themſelues, and walke along with Feare; as they haue really, great cauſe, to be afrayd. And, if they returne not to Prayer, they will be ſure to goe from bad, to worſe; for, this * indeed doe I call a true Fall, when one comes once, to abhorre that verie way, whereby they purchaſed ſo great a good; and it is with ſuch Soules, that I am ſpeaking, now. For I ſay not, that Soules will neuer offend God, nor that they will neuer committ anie Sinne; though yet ſtill, it were but reaſon, that whoſoeuer had begunne to receaue ſuch Fauours, as theſe, ſhould be very carefull, to keep themſelues, from committing anie. But, in fine, we are miſerable Creatures; and that, which I aduiſe very earneſtly, is, that they will not giue-ouer their Prayer; for there, ſhall they come to know, what they are doing; and there, ſhall they

* *Note.*

gaine

gaine ſorrow, for hauing left our Lord; and ſtrength, to riſe againe. And let that Soule beleiue, (and let her doe it home) that if ſhe depart from Prayer, ſhe growes, in my opinion, to runne great hazard. I know not, whether I hitt right, in what I ſay; but, at leaſt, I iudge of others, by my ſelf.

But now, in the meane time, this kinde of Prayer, is a certaine Sparke of the Fire of that true Loue, which our Lord beginnes to kindle in a Soule; and his pleaſure alſo is, that the ſame Soule ſhall goe vnderſtanding, what kinde of thing this Loue is, and what kinde of great Regalo, and delight, it brings. This Quiet, and Recollection, and litle Sparke, if indeed it be of the Spirit of God, and not a guſt, either giuen by the Diuel, or yet procured by our ſelues; (though yet ſtill, one, who hath experience, cannot poſſibly but vnderſtand, at the verie inſtant, that it is no ſuch thing, as can be acquired; ſaue that, euen in our verie Naturall condition, we are ſo greedie of all that, which is ſauourie, that we will needs taſt of all) but if as I ſayd, it be of the Diuel, we quickly grow againe, to be very cold. And, how much ſoeuer we our ſelues, may beginne to make this Fire alſo burne, for the procuring of this guſt, we ſeem to haue indeed a minde, to doe no other buſines heerby, then to caſt-on water enough, to quench it. whereas, if, in verie deed, this little Sparke were of Diuine Loue, and were conveyed by Almightie God, into the Soule, how ſmall,

and poore soeuer it be, it would find some shift, or other, to make a mightie noise. And if the Soule doe not quench it, by her owne fault, this proues that verie thing, which beginnes to make a huge kinde of fire; and sends forth, great flames from it self (as I shall declare in fitt place) of that mighty loue of God, which his Diuine Maiestie is gratiously pleased, that perfect Soules should enioy. And this verie Sparke, is a certaine kinde of signe, and euen pawne, which his Diuine Maiestie giues to that Soule, to shew that he chooses her out, for great things, if she will make her self fitt to receaue them. I say, this is a mighty guift, yea and farre greater, then I am anie way able to expresse. And it is matter of much greife to me, that (as I was saying) I know manie Soules, which ariue thus farre, and that yet, there are so very few, which passe further, (at least, as they ought to passe) that I am euen ashamed to confesse it. I say not, that there are so very few, who passe on; for it may very well be, that there are manie; for God doth not sustaine vs for nothing; but I only speake of such, as I haue seen.

For my part, I would earnestly wish them, not to hide their Talent, since, it seemes, Almightie God chooses them out, for the profit of manie others; and especially in these times, when it is so necessarie, that his Diuine Maiestie should haue strong freinds, to support, and vphold such, as are weake. And let them all, who finde, that they haue receaued this great Fauour, at our Lord's hands,

hands, esteem themselues for strong, if they know, how to correspond well, with the lawes, which a firme, and fast freindship, euen of this verie world, requires. And if they will not, let them apprehend very much, and feare, that they shall doe themselues a great deale of hurt; yea, and I pray God, that it may be to none, but themselues.

That, * which the Soule is to doe, in these times of enioying this Quiet, is but only, * that with suauitie, and without noyse, she employ the Will to vnderstand, with much calmnes, and discretion, that the Soule is not to negotiate with Almightie God, by the strength of the Arme. I call it noyse, if the Vnderstanding goe seeking-out manie words, and considerations, to giue thanks for this benefit; and to make vp, a mightie heape of her defects, and sinnes, to shew, that she deserues not this Fauour. For all, is in motion now; and the Vnderstanding represents many things to vs; and the Memorie is boyling vp; and really, these Powers of the Minde, are wont to giue me trouble enough, at times; and, in regard that I haue but a weake Memorie, I cãnot, in these cases, subdue them. But those other considerations, and mentall discourses, be indeed no better, then as so manie great loggs of wood, which are layd, with small discretion, vpon that little Sparke of fire, to quench it. And therefore let her know, and say, with great humilitie: O Lord, what am I able to doe heer? What hath this Seruant, or Slaue, to doe, with the Lord of Heauen, and Earth?

* *Howw the Soule is to carry it selfe in Quiet Prayer.*
* *Note.*

Or els, she may vse such other words, as shall present themselues then, in the way of Loue. But note heer, that she must be very, very well grounded, vpon knowing that to be true, which she saith.

Now, as for that, which concernes the Vnderstanding, let the Soule consider it, no otherwise, then meerly; as if it were a Miller; and, if she will needs giue it part of that, which she enioyes, or shall labour to recollect it also to her self, she will find, that it is not, to proue well with her. For, manie times it is seen, that, during this Vnion, and repose, or rest, in the Will, the Vnderstanding is still much out of order; and, if the Will cannot be be able to arrest it, it is better, to let it alone, then that she should still goe hunting after it; I say, the Will. But let it remaine enioying that Fauour, and be recollected, and shut-vp in it self, like a wise * Bee; for, if no one of the Bees, should goe into the Hiue, but all, be gadding abroad, so to be still fetching one another home, there would little store of hony be made. And so, a Soule will loose very much, if she be not well aduertised of this; and especially, if the Vnderstanding be quick, and sharp. For, if once such an one, beginne to put discourses in order, and light vpon some prettie reasons, to the purpose, she will, if they be handsomly sayd, beginne to thinke, that shee performes, some great exploit. But, the discourse, which is to be vsed heer, must be a knowing clearly, and confessing plainely, that there is no other

** A true & happy Comparison.*

other reaſon at all, why Almightie God should euer doe vs ſo great a Fauour, then his owne onlie goodnes; and to conſider, that we are now approached ſo neer to him; and to begg Fauours of him; and to beſeech him alſo, for his Church, and for all ſuch, as haue recommended themſelues to vs; and ſo alſo, for the Soules in Purgatorie; and this, not by the noiſe of words, but only by a feeling deſire, to be heard, by his Diuine Maieſtie.

This is a Prayer, which comprehends very much; and we ſhall obtaine more thereby, then by multiplying much rowling diſcourſe, by way of the Vnderſtanding. But let the Will ſtirr-vp her ſelf, by ſome reaſons, which will eaſily repreſent themſelues to her then, when ſhe findes her ſelf to be ſo very much improued; to quicken-vp her Loue, and to make her performe certaine amourous acts, of how great things she would be glad to doe for one, to whome ſhe owes ſo verie much; without admitting, and permitting, as I ſayd, that the vnderſtanding part, ſhould make a noiſe, in the ſearch, and pretence, of doing high and mightie matters. For heer, anie few, little, poore ſtrawes, preſented, and offered-vp with Humilitie (and they may be ſure enough, to be ſtrawes, if we bring them) will make a great deale more, to the purpoſe, and will help to kindle a good fire more quickly, then a great deale of bigg loggs of wood, will be able to doe. I meane, reaſons, which, in our opinion, ſhall be

very ſure, to quench, and put-out the fire, euen in the turning of a hand.

This is good for learned men, who command me to write all this; for, through the goodnes of God, it may be hoped, that all of them ariue hither; and it might perhaps, ſo happen amongſt them, that this time would paſſe away, in applying ſome places of Scripture. But though that kinde of knowledge could not faile to be vſefull to them, both before ſuch occaſions as theſe, and alſo after, yet, at theſe verie times of Prayer, there would be little occaſion, to vſe it, in my opinion; vnleſſe they had a minde, to coole the feruorous employment of the Will. For, the Vnderſtanding findes it ſelf then, to poſſeſſe ſuch an exceſſiue kind of claritie, by being ſo neer to Light it ſelf, that euen I (with being ſo poore, and miſerable, as I am) ſeem to be another kinde of Creature. And it is moſt certainly true, that it hath hapned to me, being in this kind of Quiet, and without vnderſtanding, in effect, anie thing of the Prayers, which are recited, in Latin, and especially of the Pſalter, that not only I vnderſtand the Verſe in Spaniſh, but I paſſe alſo, yet further on, and delight my ſelf highly, in conſidering, what the meaning of that Spaniſh, is. I ſpeake not heer, of what it might import, if ſuch perſons were to preach, or teach others; for then it would be fitt to ſerue themſelues, of that aduantage, towards the aſſiſting of their neighbours to that good; and to help alſo poore people, who know very little, like

like me. For, Charitie is a very great matter; and so is this helping Soules forward; so that alwaies, it be done, purely, for God.

But now, in these times of possessing this great Quiet, let the Soule be suffered to remaine in rest, with her true repose, and let Learning be layd aside; for, time will come afterward, when it will fall-out to be held, in so high account, that they would by no meanes, haue missed that treasure of knowledge, if it were but only, for the power it giues them, to doe more, and better seruice, to his Diuine Maiestie; for it assists very much, in order to that excellent end. But yet belieue me still, that, in the presence of that Infinit Wisdome, a very little attention to exercise Humilitie, & one single act of that vertue, is more worth, then all the knowledge of the whole world. For heer, there is no roome, for disputing of Questions, or arguing Cases, but only to know with truth, and plainenes, what we are; & to represent our selues, with great simplicitie, in the sight of Almightie God; who desires, that the Soule should make her self, as very ignorant, and sillie, as, in verie deed, she is, when once she comes to appeare in his presence; since his Diuine Maiestie descends so much below himself, as to endure her, neer his owne person; all we, being that, which we are.

The Vnderstanding will also moue it self heer, to giue certaine thankes to Almightie God, which may be handsomely ordered, and composed; but the Will, with a certaine kinde of Quiet and peace,

peace, and with a not daring, like the Publican of the Gospell, so much as lift-vp her eyes, payes yet more retribution of thankes, then the Vnderstanding, perhaps, knowes how to doe, with reuoluing all the Rhetorick, in the world. But, in fine, we are not totally, in this case, to forbeare to make Mentall Prayer; no, nor yet sometimes, to vse some Vocall Words, if we will, and can. And I say, *can*; because if the Quiet be great, and deep, they will hardly enough be able to speake, without making it cost them much paine.

** The good Spirit very easily discerned from the bad.*

In * my opinion, we may well vnderstand, when this is of the Spirit of Almightie God; and when it happens to be procured, by our selues, though it be vpon a beginning of that deuotion, which God giues vs. For, when, as I haue sayd, wee will needs resolue our selues, of our selues, to procure to passe on, to this possessing the Quiet of the Will, it vses to worke no good effect, at all; but quickly ends, and leaues nothing but drynes, behind it. And, if it chance to proceed from the Diuel, a Soule, which is exercised in this kind, will, I belieue, grow easily to vnderstand it; for, in that case, it will leaue a certaine kind of disquiet, and little affection to Humilitie, and an vntoward disposition, in order to the producing of those effects, which the Spirit of Almightie God, is wont to breed; nor doth it also leaue, either light, in the Vnderstanding, or a constant loue of truth, in the Will. And this, will doe a Soule, either very little hurt, or none at all, if she direct,

and

and addreſſe the ſuauitie, and delight, which then ſhe feeles, to the glorie of Almightie God; and, if ſhe lodge her thoughts, and deſires, vpon him, as I haue formerly aduiſed, the Diuel will gaine little, by the bargaine. Nay, rather Almightie God will ſo diſpoſe of things, that he ſhall looſe much, euen by that verie delight, which he cauſes in her Soule; for, this verie delight, shall be a meanes, to make that Soule, which conceaues, that it proceeds from God, to come againe, often to Prayer, with deſire to receaue more delight, Or els, if the Soule be very humble, and not withall, very curious, nor very much intereſſed, in taking delights (though euen they be ſpirituall) but be indeed, a true friend to the Croſſe, ſhe will make very little account of anie guſt, which the Diuel can giue her; which yet ſhe ſhall neuer be able to doe, if, indeed, it be the Spirit of God; for, in that caſe, she will euer be ſure, to hold it, in verie high account. Now, when the Diuel propounds ſuch a buſines, (ſince he is all, made of Lyes) whenſoeuer he ſees a Soule abaſe, and humble her ſelf, by meanes of that delight, and guſt, which she receaues (for, indeed, we are to haue very great care, to procure to proue very humble, vpon all the occaſions of Prayer, and guſts) the Diuel will not returne to tempt vs very often, when he cõſiders, how much he looſes, by the endeauour.

For this reaſon, and vpon manie other conſiderations, did I aduertiſe, in the Firſt Degree, and State of Prayer (which anſwers to the Firſt way of

* *Note this point, aboue all.*

of drawing Water, in the Garden) that it is a* principall busines, when the Soule is entring first, vpon Prayer, to beginne to vntye her self, from the desyre of all kinde of sensible contentment; and to enter vpon this onlie resolution, to help our Lord IESVS, to carrie his Crosse; like good Cauallers, who are resolued to serue their King without wages, since they are so sure of him, as they are. And we are also, still to carrie our eyes, vpon that true, and euerlasting Kingdome, which we procure to acquire.

It is a very great point, to haue this euer in view, and especially in the beginnings; for afterwards, it is seen so very clearly, that it may rather be fitt, to forget it; to the end, that we may be able euen to liue, then procure to be remembring, that the world is to last very little; and that all, in fine, is nothing; and that heer, the ease and rest, which we can haue, is to be esteemed for nothing. This may seem to be a very poore, and base consideration; and so indeed it is; for they, who haue proceeded to more perfection, would take it for an affront, and would euen blush, and be ashamed amongst thēselues, if they thought, they forsooke the goods of this world, because they must come once, to haue an end. For, although those goods were to last alwaies, they would yet reioyce to leaue them, for the loue of our Lord; and still the more perfect they were, they would reioyce so much the more; yea, & the more also would they reioyce, the longer they beleiued, they were to last.

In

In theſe men, this Loue, is already growne-vp to ſtrength; and it is this, which workes moſt; but for ſuch, as are but Beginners, it is a point of higheſt importance (and they muſt, by no meanes, hold it for low) to be content, to leaue all guſts, for God. For, the benefits, which are gained by this cõſideration, are great; and therefore doe I aduiſe it ſo much. Nay, euen thoſe others, who are moſt eleuated, and accompliſhed in Prayer, will haue need alſo of ſuch conſiderations, as theſe. And there are times, when Almightie God will try them; nay it will ſeem, as if his Diuine Maieſtie would forſake them. For (as I haue ſayd already, and I would faine not haue it be forgotten) the Soule in this life, which we liue, encreaſes not, as the Bodie doth; though yet we ſay it doe; and really, it doth encreaſe; but yet a Child, after he is growne, and become tall, and proues to be already a man, returnes not to decreaſe againe, and to haue a little bodie. Yet now, in the point of a Soule, our Lord will haue it be otherwiſe, by what I haue ſeen of my ſelf; for I know it not, in reſpect of others; and it ought to humble vs, for our owne greater good, and to the end alſo, that we may not be negligent, as long as we ſhall be in this banniſhment; ſince he, who is higheſt in vertue, ſhall doe well, to feare himſelf moſt, and to truſt himſelf leaſt. The times, perhaps, may come, when euen they, who haue their Will, ſo conforme to the Holie Will of Almightie God, that they would rather be tormented, and endure a thouſand

deaths,

deaths, then swarue from it, shall doe well, to be in doubt, that euen they, may grow to fall, into some great offence of his Diuine Maiestie. And so, there are certaine times, when they shall see themselues so assaulted by temptations, and persecutions, that, to the end, they may not commit grosse sinnes, they will haue need to serue themselues, of the First Defensiue weapons of Prayer; and returne to remember, and consider, that all the world, is finally to end; and that there is a Heauen, and a Hell; and to vse such considerations, as these.

But now, returning to what I was saying, a great foundation it is (for being freed from the subtle enterprises, and gusts, which the Diuel is wont to giue) to beginne with a firme* purpose, at the verie first, to walke in the way of the Crosse; and to desire no such thing, as gusts; since our Lord himself shewed this way of perfection; by saying: *Take thou vp thy Crosse, and follow me.* For he is to be our Patterne; and whosoeuer shall follow his counsels, and that, for no other reason, then to content him, may be sure, that he shall haue nothing to feare. And by the spirituall profit, which they shall finde in themselues, they will easily come to know, that the Diuel had no hand therein; and though they should euen returne to fall againe, there will yet remaine one signe, that our Lord had been there: which is, That they will quickly rise againe; besides these others, which I shall now declare.

* *A most necessary Document.*

When

When it is the Spirit of Almightie God, there will be no need at all, to goe in Queſt, and Sent, after certaine reaſons, to draw humilitie, and confuſion, from thence. For, our Bleſſed Lord himſelf, is wont to impart it, in thoſe caſes, after a very different manner, from that, which our ſelues can procure, by anie prettie little conſiderations of our owne; all which, are nothing, in compariſon of a certaine true * Humilitie, that comes along with a light, which our Lord inſtructs vs in, heer; and which breeds ſuch a reall confuſion in vs, as euen doth ētirely defeat vs. And the knowledge, which Almightie God is wont to giue vs, to the end, that we may perfectly vnderſtand, that we haue no good at all, of our ſelues, is a thing very ſufficiently perceaued; and ſtill, ſo much the more, as we receaue the higher Fauours, from his hands. It alſo imparts to a man, a very great deſire, to proceed in Prayer; and he will not giue it ouer, for anie trouble, which may poſſibly ſucceed to him. He offers himſelf, and is readie to endure all things. He hath alſo a kind of aſſured hope, that he ſhall be ſaued; though yet ſtill, not without humilitie, and feare. By this time, he alſo inſtantly forſakes all kind of ſeruile feare, of his Soule; and it giues a great deale of growth, to a Filiall feare, in ſtead thereof. He ſees, that now he beginns to beare a certaine loue, towards Almightie God, which is farre from anie intereſt of his owne; & he couets to get times for Solitude, that ſo, he may haue the better oportunitie, to enioy that good. In fine,

* *A great bleſsing, by meanes of this Prayer.*

(that I may not wearie my ſelf too much) this is a direct beginning, of all good things; a State, wherein the Flowers are now vpon the verie point, to bloſſome. And all this, the Soule ſees very clearly; and can, by no meanes, at that time, conceaue, but that God was, and will be with her, till ſuch time, as ſhe ſhall returne, to find her ſelf guiltie of faylings, and imperfections, towards him; for, in that caſe, ſhe feares all things; and it is fitt, that ſhe doe ſo. Though yet, there are *Soules in the world, to which it proues more vſefull, to beleiue, for a moſt certaine truth, that they are well with Almightie God; then all the feares of the world, are able to giue them. For, if the Soule, in her ſelf, be apt to be enamoured, and gratefull, the memorie of that great Fauour, which God did her, will be of more power, to make her returne, to his Diuine Maieſtie, then all the torments of Hell, which they can poſſibly be euer able to repreſent. At leaſt (as wicked, as I am) it hapned after this manner, to me. Now, as for the ſignes of a good Spirit, I will ſpeake of them heerafter, more at large; for now I cannot doe it, ſince it coſts me ſo much trouble, of manie kindes, to get them written out, faire; and I belieue, that, with the fauour of our Lord, I may be able to hitt right, in this kinde; for, (beſides the experience, which I haue, whereby I came to vnderſtand manie things) I know ſomewhat, by meanes of ſome learned men, who, indeed, are very learned; and of ſome perſons alſo, who are very holie; to whome

* *Theſe, are the more generous mindes.*

whome it is great reason, to giue beleif. And therefore, let not other Soules be so very much afflicted, and vexed, as I haue been; when once, through the goodnes of Almightie God, they shall be come on, so farre, as to find themselues in this State.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

She treats of the Third Degree of Prayer, and goes declaring some very high points; and vvhat a Soule, vvhich ariues thus farre, may be able to doe; and vvhat effects, these so great Fauours of our Lord, are accustomed to vvorke. The sense heerof, is very fitt, to raise the Spirit high, in the praises of Almightie God; and it is also of great consolation, for the Soule, vvhich ariues to this State.

LEt vs now come to speake of the Third Water, wherewith this Garden is watered; for, this, is a running Water of a Riuer, or Spring; and it waters it with much lesse labour; though yet the distribution thereof, causes some. Our Lord will heer so help the Gardner, that, in some sort, he will be, as it were, the Gardner himself, and, in effect, the Doer of all. This is a sweet repose, or sleep of all the Powers, which are yet neither totally lost, nor yet doe they know, how they

worke. This guſt, and delight, and ſuauitie, is greater, beyond all compariſon, then the former; for, the Water of this grace, gets-vp to the verie throat of the Soule; in ſuch ſort, that now it cannot goe forward; nor knowes, how to doe it; nor yet would, by anie meanes, returne backward; but enioyes an exceſſiue kinde of glorie. It is, as when a man is already, with the Holie * Candle, in his hand; ſo that now, there wants very little, of dying; but it is of that verie death, which is deſired; for ſhe is enioying the greateſt delight, that can be imagined, in that agonie of hers; and me thinkes, it is no other thing, then euen to dye, as it were, entirely, to all the things of this world, and to be enioying Almightie God. For my part, I can thinke of no other tearmes, wherewith to expreſſe it, or declare it; nor knowes the Soule, at that time, what to doe; nor, whether ſhe ſhould ſpeake, or be ſilent; or laugh, or weep. * It is a glorious kinde of Frenſie; and a Celeſtiall kinde of Follie, where yet, true wiſdome is learnt; and it is a moſt delightfull manner of enioying, for the Soule, in a Superlatiue Degree. It is true that it may be about ſome fiue, or ſix yeares, ſince firſt our Lord vouchſafed to allow me this kinde of Prayer, often, and in great abundance; and that I neither did, either perfectly vnderſtand it, nor yet can exactly declare it; and for my part, I made account, when I was come hither, that I could ſay, either little, or nothing. And yet I well vnderſtood, that this was not an entire Vnion of all the Powers

** As vvhen one is dyinge.*

** This is an admirable State of Minde.*

Powers of the Soule; and yet ſtill, that it was clearly more, then might be found in the former Degree of Prayer; and yet withall, I muſt euer confeſſe, that I could not tell, how to know, and much leſſe exactly determine, what this differẽce was. But I well believe, that, for the humilitie, which your Reuerence hath ſhewed, in being deſirous to help your ſelf, by ſo great a ſimplicitie, as mine, our Lord gaue me this Prayer, this day, immediatly after my receauing the B. Sacrament; yet without my being able, to goe forward. And he put theſe Compariſons into my head, and taught me the manner, how to expreſſe them, and what the Soule is to doe, in theſe caſes; and really, I was amazed at it; for, I vnderſtood all this buſines, at an inſtant. Manie times, I was, as it were, out of my ſelf, and as if I had been euen inebriated with this loue; and yet I could neuer vnderſtand, how it was. Only I knew very well, that it was God; but I could not tell the manner, how he wrought in me, at that time. For it is the verie truth, that the * Powers are, as it were, all vnited, though yet not ſo ingulfed, but that ſtill they worke; and I haue been extreamly ioyed, that, at length, I am come to vnderſtand it; and Bleſſed be our Lord for euer, who hath regaled me, in ſo high a degree. Theſe Powers haue only now abilitie, to buſie themſelues totally, vpon Almightie God; nor doth it ſeem, that anie of them now, euen dares ſo much as houer, or ſtirre, not, as it were, breath, if we doe not diuert our

* *The true State of the Powers of the Minde, in this Prayer.*

ſelues then, with great endeauour; yea and euen ſo, me thinkes, we can ſcarce doe it entirely, at that time. A multitude of words, are conceaued heer, by the Soule, in praiſe of our Lord; but yet ſo, as that they are without anie order, vnleſſe our Lord himſelf be pleaſed, to order them; for, at leaſt, the Vnderſtanding ſerues heer, for nothing. The Soule would faine cry out, in praiſe of Almightie God; & ſhe is then, in ſuch condition, as that ſhe knowes not, how to cõtaine her ſelf. This is now, a very ſauourie kinde of diſquiet; and now, yea euen very now, the Flowers open themſelues, to bloſſome; and already doe they beginne, to yeild their odour. And heer the Soule would be glad, that all the world might be able to ſee, and vnderſtand her glorie, that ſo, Almightie God might be praiſed; and that they might be able to aſſiſt her therein; and that ſhe might giue them part of her ioy; as not knowing, how to enioy it all, her ſelf. Me thinkes, ſhe is now, to be like her, of the Ghoſpel, who had a minde, to call-in all her Neighbours. Or els, like, the admirable Spirit of the Royall Prophet Dauid who might feele ſome ſuch thing in himſelf, as this, when he played vpon his Harpe, and ſung, in honour, and praiſe of Almightie God. I find my ſelf very much deuoted, to this Glorious King; and I wiſh, that all the world were ſo; eſpecially all we, who are Sinners.

O my deare Lord; what kind of thing, is a Soule, when she findes her ſelf in ſuch a condition, as this?

this?She would faine become,all Toung,to praiſe our Lord.She vtters a thouſand holie impertinencies;but yet,ſhe doth euer endeauour to hitt right, in pleaſing him, who holds her there, in that manner.I know of a certaine perſon,who,though ſhe were no Poet, yet inſtantly did ſhe happen to make certaine Verſes, all, ex tempore, which were very ſignificant in the way of complaint, & declared her paine very well, though they were not made, by her owne Vnderſtanding, alone; but, for the better enioying that glorie, which gaue her ſo delightfull a paine, ſhe complained thereof, to her God. She wiſhes, that ſhe might be all torne in pieces, both in Bodie,and Soule,to ſhew the ioy ſhe findes,to feele this paine. What torměts,could then,be ſet before her,which then, ſhe would not be glad to endure, for the loue of our Lord? She clearly ſees, that the Martyrs did very little, on their parts, when they ſuffered torments; for, the Soule knowes then, very well, that her ſtrength comes to her, by ſome other way,then from her ſelf.

But now, what will ſhe feele, when ſhe comes back, to employ her witts, vpon knowing how to liue againe, in this world; and to returne both to the cares, and complements, thereof. And certainly, me thinkes, I am farre, from hauing exaggerated anie thing, concerning this manner of ioy, which our Lord is pleaſed, to make a Soule poſſeſſe, euen in this place of bannishment; for, all that,which I haue ſayd of it, is very poore, and

meane, in compariſon of what it is, in it ſelf. Bleſſed be thou for euer, O Lord; and let all things praiſe thee, for euer; And be pleaſed, O my King, (I moſt humbly beſeech, and begg, at thy hands) that, ſince when euen now I am not wholy out of this holie Celeſtiall Frenſie, or follie, (which, through thy goodnes, and mercie, and ſo wholy without anie merit of mine, thou doſt me the great Fauour to impart,) either all ſuch perſons, as with whome I ſhall haue occaſion to conuerſe, may be euen, as it were, madd fooles, for thy loue; or els, diſpoſe thou ſo, of me, as that I may neuer conuerſe more, with any Creature; or els finally, O Lord, giue order, that I may haue nothing to doe in this world; or, at leaſt, take me out of it, quite. For now already, O my God, this Seruant of thine, is no longer able to endure ſo great afflictions, as ſhe feeles to come vpon her, by her being thus, without thee. And if ſhe needs muſt liue, ſhe deſires to haue no eaſe in this life; nor, indeed, doſt thou giue her anie; for it is death to her, to ſee her ſelf eat; ſhe is afflicted, by the ſleep ſhe takes; ſhe findes, that her whole life, is ſpent, and paſt through, in Regalo's; and yet that now, there is nothing, but thy ſelf, who can indeed regale her; So that it ſeemes, I liue now euen againſt nature, ſince now I would faine not liue in my ſelf, but only in thee.

O thou my true Lord, and my Glorie! how delicate, and yet how hugely heauie, is that Croſſe, which thou haſt prepared, and prouided for

for ſuch, as ariue to this State? It is delicate, becauſe it is incredibly ſweet; and it is heauie, becauſe there grow to be certaine times, when there is not patience enough, in the whole world, to enable vs to endure it; and yet the Soule would neuer deſire, to be free from it, vnleſſe it were, to the end, that she might find her ſelf once, to be with thee. And when alſo the ſame Soule remembers, that she was neuer able to doe thee ſeruice, in anie thing; and that, by continuing to liue, it may yet, perhaps, be poſſible for her, to ſerue thee, she would be glad, if she might lye vnder a very much more heauie burthen, then the former; yea, and that ſhe might alſo neuer dye, euen till the verie end of the world. She values not anie manner of repoſe, or reſt, ſo much as to the weight of one haire, in compariſon of doing thee anie poore little ſeruice; nor doth ſhe know, what more to deſire; but ſhe is only ſure of thus much, that ſhe deſires nothing, but thy ſelf.

O my Sonne (for you, to whome this is directed, and who haue commanded me to write it, are ſo humble, that you will needs be called, by that name) let theſe things be only for your ſelf, when you ſee, that I am gone out of all limits; for there is no kind of reaſon, which ſuffices to keep me from leauing the vſe of humane reaſon, when our Lord is pleaſed to draw me thus, out of my ſelf. Nor doe I know, or belieue, that it is I, who am ſpeaking thus, euer

ſince I receaued the B. Sacrament, this morning. For, me thinkes, I doe but dreame, of what I ſee; and I would be glad, not to ſee anie other, then ſuch, as are ſick of that verie ſame diſeaſe, which is now vpon me. I humbly beſeech your Reuerence, that we may all, become like madd fooles, for his loue, who was content to be called Foole, for the loue of vs. And, ſince your Reuerence ſayes, that you wiſh me ſo cordially well, I deſire, that you will ſhew it, by diſpoſing your ſelf in ſuch ſort, as that our Lord may doe you this Fauour. For, I ſee, there are very few men, who haue not more witt, then euen they need, for the effecting ſuch things, as they hold, to concerne them; but now perhaps, I may haue more, then they all. But doe not you ſuffer this, my deare Father, (ſince you are ſo, as well as my Sonne; becauſe you are my Confeſſarius, to whoſe hands I haue committed the care of my Soule) but vnbeguile me, by telling me truth; though truths be, now a-dayes, ſeldome told. And now I would be very glad, that we Fiue, who, at the preſent, loue one another, in Chriſt our Lord; That, I ſay, as others meet in ſecret, againſt the Seruice of his Diuine Maieſtie, for the ordering of their wickednes, and their Hereſies; we alſo might procure, ſometimes, to meet, for the diſabuſing one another; and to conferr, how we might reforme our ſelues, and giue Almightie God, more guſt. For, there is no Creature, that knowes himſelf ſo well, as they doe, who looke vpon vs; ſo that

that it be with true loue, and care of our amendment. I speake of this, as a Secret, and in your eare; for now, already, no such language, as this, is vsed; when euen Preachers themselues, goe so composing their Sermons, as that they may be sure, to giue men no disgust by them. But their intention, forsooth, is so good, as that the fruits will be answerable to it; and so we see, how few grow to mend their liues. But how comes it now to passe, that they are not very manie, who giue ouer, to be publique in following vice, by meanes of those Sermõs, which are made? Shall I tell, what I thinke? It is, becausse the Preachers, make themselues too wise. Not yet, that they are indeed, without witt, by reason of any great fyre of the Loue of Almighty God, which is in their harts, as the Apostles were; and so their flame falls-out to giue but very little heat. I say not, that I expect, that it should be so great, as theirs was; but yet I hartily wish, that it were greater, then I can now find it is. Your Reuerence knowes, in what, very much, would consist; Namely, in hauing this life of ours, in detestation; and honour, in very little estimation; and that, rather then faile, both to speake truth, and to maintaine it, for the glorie of Almightie God, we would be as well contented to loose all, as to gaine all. For, whosoeuer is resolued, in very good earnest, to put it all, to hazard, for the loue of our Blessed Lord, will be as well content, with the one, as with the other. I say not, that I am anie such Crea-

Creature; but I hartily wiſh I were.

O great, and gallant Libertie, to eſteem it for a direct captiuitie, to be bound to liue, and conuerſe, according to the Lawes of this World! For, when this is once obtained, at the hands of Almightie God, there is not ſo baſe a Slaue vpon Earth, as would not venture all; that, ſo he might redeem himſelf, and returne home to his owne Countrie. And, ſince this, wherein we are, is the true way; there is neither cauſe, nor colour, why we ſhould deſire, to loyter in it. For we ſhall neuer finiſh the gaining of ſo great a treaſure, till we make an end of this life; and till our Lord giue vs his grace, to doe it well. I humbly pray your Reuerence, to teare this, which I haue written, if you thinke fitt; and pardon me; for I haue preſumed too farre.

THE SEAVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

She proſecutes the ſame Argument, about this Third Degree of Prayer; And finiſhes the declaration of the effects, vvhich it vvorkes; and declares alſo, the diſaduantage, vvhich the Memorie, and Imagination, are vvont to bring, in this caſe.

I Haue already ſpoken, to ſome good proportion, of this manner of Prayer, and of that, which the Soule is to performe therein; or rather of

of what God doth in her; for now it is himself, who takes the Office of Gardner, vpon him; and he will haue her, take her ease; and only, that the Will may accept of those Fauours, which she enioyes; and she must offer her self, to goe through, with all that, which he, who is true Wisdome, shall be pleased to ordaine; for which purpose, there is really need, of a great deale of courage. For, so great, * and high, vses that ioy to be, that sometimes it seems, that there needs not so much, as a haires breadth, for making the Soule goe instantly out of that Bodie; and O, what a happie death would that be! And heer, me thinkes, that comes in, very well, which once was sayd to your Reuerence, that you must leaue your self wholy, in the Armes of God; If he will carrie you to Heauen, That you goe; If to Hell, there will be no torment there, so that you be with him, who is your totall good; If instantly to make an end of this life, That you desire nothing els; And yet, that you be as well pleased, if yet, he will haue you liue, a thousand yeares. Let his Diuine Maiestie dispose of you, as of a thing, which is properly his owne; for, your Soule is now no longer yours, but it wholy belongs to our Lord; and therefore you must be altogeather out of care. Now I say, that in so eleuated, and high a Prayer, as this, she vnderstands that she can performe it, without anie wearines at all, to the Vnderstanding; for when God giues this Prayer to a Soule, she is able to doe all this; yea, and can

also

alſo worke other manner of effects, then theſe. Only me thinkes, ſhe is, as it were, amazed, to ſee our Lord performe the Office of a good Gardner, ſo well; and is not pleaſed, that ſhe ſhould take anie trouble or paines; but only that ſhe is to delight her ſelf, in beginning to enioy the odour of thoſe Flowers. For, in one ſuch approach as this, (how little a while ſoeuer it may laſt) ſuch a kind of Gardner this is (for, he is the Creatour of the Water, and he giues it ſo very freely, beyond meaſure) that, what this ſingle poore Soule was not able to aſſemble, by the labour of tyring-out her Vnderſtanding, in twentie yeares togeather, this Celeſtiall Gardner doth it all, in one moment of time; and the Fruit doth ſo grow, and become ripe, that it is able, through the good pleaſure of our Lord, to ſuſtaine the Owner thereof, and to enable him, to liue vpon the gaine, which he makes by it. Only, he giues not this Soule leaue, to Preſent of this Fruit, to others, till ſuch time, as ſhe be growne ſtrong, by what her ſelf hath eaten of it; and ſhe muſt not ſquander it away, in trying idly, how it taſts. For ſo, (ſhe not valuing the profit, which ſhe might make by it, nor they paying her anie thing for it, to whome ſhe gaue it) ſhe comes to maintaine, and feed them vp, at her coſt, whilſt her ſelf may, by degrees, grow to be readie to dye, of hungar. This will perhaps, be well comprehended by them, who haue a right kind of vnderſtanding, and will know, how to apply it better, then I can declare

declare it; and now I am euen wearie, to thinke if it.

In a word, the truth is this, that the vertues, which are obtained in this Prayer, remaine so much stronger heer, then in the Prayer of Quiet (whereof I spake before) that the Soule cannot be ignorant thereof. For she finds her selfe to be wholy growne, another kind of thing, then she was; and she beginnes (she euen scarce knowes, how) to act, and worke great things, by the odour, which the Flowers yeild, of themselues. For now, our Lord is pleased, that they may sprowt, and open; to the end, that she may know, she hath vertues; though yet withall, she see very clearly, that she was not able, to acquire, and get them; but that the Celestiall Gardner, was pleased to impart them to her, as it were, at an instant. The humilitie also of this Soule, is much greater, and more profound, then in the former Prayer; because she sees more clearly, that her self did, neither much, nor little, but only consent, that our Lord might doe her those Fauours; and she embrace them, with her Will. To me it seemes, that there is, in this kind of Prayer, a very euident *Vnion of the whole Soule, with God; saue that, it also seemes, that his Diuine Maiestie giues libertie to the Powers thereof, to vnderstand, and enioy the abundance, of what he works therein. Now, it happens sometimes, yea and manie times, that the Will being thus vnited (that your Reuerence may see, both that this may be, and may also

* *Howw there is an Vnion in this Prayer; & howw there is none.*

be

be able, to vnderſtand it, when you haue it; and, at leaſt, it puts me almoſt out of my witts, & therefore I relate it to you heer) knowes, and vnderſtands, that it is tyed-vp, and bound, and yet in condition of enioying. I ſay againe, it knowes, that it ſelf, being the Will, remaines in much Quiet, whilſt yet, on the other ſide, the Vnderſtanding, and Memorie, are free, and are able to treat of buſineſſes, & to attend to certaine workes of Charitie. Now, though this ſeem to be all one, with that, which was ſpoken of, in that other Diſcourſe of Quiet Prayer, yet it is different. Becauſe there, the Soule is in ſuch caſe, as it would faine not ſtirr, nor moue it ſelf, in that kinde of Prayer, as enioying the leaſure and contemplation of Marie; I meane, of S. Marie Magdalen; Whereas heer, in this Prayer, she can alſo act the part of Martha. So that she doth now, in effect, performe the offices, both of the Actiue, and of the Contemplatiue life; and all at once; and is able to exerciſe her ſelf, vpon thoſe buſineſſes, and workes of Charitie, which are incident to her condition. And she can alſo read; though yet ſtill, the Powers, or Faculties of her Soule, are not abſolutly the Lords of themſelues; and ſtill she vnderſtāds well enough, that the greateſt part of her ſelf (that is to ſay, her cheif attention, and operation) is ſomewhere els. It is iuſt, as if we were ſpeaking with ſome one; and that withall, at the ſelf ſame time, ſome other perſon were ſpeaking to vs, in ſuch ſort, as that we were not entirely atten-

attentiue, either to the one, or to the other. But it is a thing, which is perceaued very clearly, and giues great satisfaction, and contentment, whensoeuer it ariues; and it vses to be a very great preparation, and disposition, to the end, that, whensoeuer the Partie may be in anie Solitude, or exemption from busines, the Soule may instantly enioy a very perfect quietnes, and repose. This is a certaine Being, as if a person receaued such a kinde of satisfaction, and cessation of appetite in himself, as that he would haue no need at all, to eat, but felt his stomack content; in such sort, as that he would not easily apply himself to tast, of whatsoeuer should be set before him; but yet withall, that, if he saw such meate as he liked, he would not forbeare to eat of it. For iust so, doth the Soule, not satisfye her self, nor is content to feed vpon the meate of this world, because she findes that, in her self, which giues her satisfaction, it being the farre greater cõtentment, which she hath in Almightie God; and her desire also is, to satisfye euen those desires of hers; and this is that, which she procures.

There is also, another kinde of Vnion, which euen yet, is not so much, as an absolute, and entire Vnion, though it be greater then that, of which I was speaking before; and not altogeather so great, as that of this Third Water; And your Reuerence will be very glad (supposing, that our Lord bestow them all, vpon you, if you haue them not already) to finde it written thus; and

directly to vnderstand, what it is. For it is one kinde of Fauour, for our Lord to impart the same very Fauour; and another, to vnderstand, what grace, and Fauour, that is; yea, and yet another, to be able, to vnfold, and declare, how it passes. And howsoeuer it may seem, that there may no more, then the First of these Three, be needfull, for the keeping of the Soule, from being in a kinde of confusion, and feare, and for enabling it to goe forward, with more courage, in the way of our Lord, euen treading with the verie feet thereof, vpon all the things of this world; yet is it a Fauour of so great aduantage, to vnderstand it, that it is reason, that both he, who hath it; and euen he also, who hath it not, should praise our Lord, much, for it; because his Diuine Maiestie hath been pleased to giue it to some one, who is yet aliue, to the end, that he might also doe vs good.

Now, it happens also manie times to me, that I haue this manner of Vnion, whereof I am speaking; for it pleases Almightie God, to doe me this Fauour, very, very often; and that God recollects, and takes hold of my Will; yea and also, in my opinion, of my Vnderstanding; for then, it discourses no longer, but is employed, vpon enioying Almightie God; as one, who stands looking, and looking, and sees so very much, that he knowes not indeed, which way to looke; for, one thing instantly appeares, which takes away the sight of the other; and so, nothing makes anie impres-

impreſſion at all. The Memorie, remaines free; and ſo alſo doth the Imagination, ſeem to doe; and this Imagination, when it findes it ſelf thus, all alone, (that is, without being controuled by the Vnderſtanding) it would make a bodie wonder extreamly, to ſee, what a coyle it keeps; and what a warre, it makes; and procures, to put all, out of order. For my part, I am ſure, it tires me; and I am alſo ſure, that I abhorre it; and I haue often beſought our Lord, that, if it muſt needs diſtract me ſtill, after this manner, he will be pleaſed, to take it from me, in theſe occaſions. And ſometimes I preſume to ſay thus to him: When, O my God, is this whole Soule of mine, to be entirely vnited, in thy praiſe; and not deuided thus, into peices, without being ſo much as able, to ſerue her ſelf, of her ſelf. But heer, doe I, in the meane time, diſcerne the miſcheif, which hath been brought vpon vs, by Sinne; ſince it makes vs be ſo ſubiect, to the not doing, of what we ſo much deſire; which is, to be euer buſied about Almightie God.

I ſay, this happens to me diuerſe times, and one of thoſe times, was this verie day: and ſo, I may the better remember it. For, in fine, I ſee my Soule, euen diſſolue, and defeat her ſelf, through the deſire, which ſhe hath to be wholy there, where ſhe finds her ſelf, for the moſt part, to be already; and yet, that this is impoſſible, becauſe both the Memorie, and Imagination, doe ſtill make ſuch warre vpon her, that they ſuffer her

not to worke, like her ſelf. And though they be not able, to doe her anie hurt, in regard that the other Powers, and Faculties are wanting; yet indeed, they may well be thought, to doe hurt enough, by the diſquiet, they giue. But yet ſtill I ſay, that they doe her properly no hurt; becauſe, indeed, they haue no ſtrength; nor doe they fix themſelues in anie one Being, or State. And, in regard that the Vnderſtanding doth not help the Imagination, in that, which it repreſents, either more, or leſſe, it cannot faſten vpon anie thing; but skipps, vp & downe, from one to another. And it is like thoſe importunate, and vnquiet little Gnatts, which buzze, and whizze by night, heer, and there; for iuſt ſo, are theſe Powers wont to goe, from one to another. This Compariſon ſeemes to me, to be extreamly proper; for though theſe inferiour Faculties, haue not ſtrength, and meanes, to doe harme, yet are they troubleſome enough, to ſuch as feele them. Nor doe I know, what remedie there is, againſt this inconuenience; for hitherto, Almightie God hath not enabled me to find anie out; & if he had, I would haue been very glad, to vſe it; for it torments me (as I ſayd) very often. But in this, is our miſerie made apparant to vs; and ſo alſo doth the power of Almightie God ſhine very clearly in it, ſince this Faculty of the Soule, which is looſe, can put vs to ſo much trouble, and ſo tire vs, whilſt yet thoſe other, which are employed, and doe attend ſo neer to his Diuine Maieſtie, make vs feele ſo much eaſe, & ioy.

The

The last Remedie, vpon which I haue falne, after my hauing wearied my self manie yeares, is that, whereof I spoke, in Quiet Prayer; That we should make no more account therof, then we would, of some starke-madd-Foole; but to let it still alone, in telling that impertinent idle Tale, wherein God only can impose silence. And since, in fine, it remaines to vs heer, in the nature of a Slaue, we must be content to endure it, as *Iacob*, did *Lya*; for, our Lord doth vs Fauour enough, to permitt, that we may enioy *Rachel*. I say, that it remaines as a Slaue; by reason, that it cannot draw the other Powers, or Faculties to it, how vehemently soeuer it may striue; but rather, they draw it often to them, without anie difficultie at all. Yea, and sometimes our Lord is pleased to haue pittie, to see euen the Imagination it self, so very much disquieted, and lost, through desire to be in companie with the other Faculties, and Powers of the Minde; and then, his Diuine Maiestie is content, that it also, may be burnt vp, in the fire of that Diuine Taper, where those others are already euen consumed to dust; and where (hauing, as it were, euen lost their Naturall Being) they are enioying so great Blessings, in a Supernaturall kind.

In all these wayes, of this last Fountaine-Water, whereof I haue spoken, the peacefull rest, and glorie of the Soule, is so great, that euen the Bodie doth very manifestly participate of that ioy, and delight; I say, it doth so, very manifestly; yea, and

the vertues alſo of the Minde, encreaſe, and grow ſtronger, as I haue ſayd.

And now it ſeemes to me, that our Lord hath declared theſe States of Prayer, wherein the Soule may diſcerne her ſelf, as farre, as ſhe can be giuen to be vnderſtood heer. And your Reuerence ſhall doe well, to conferr about it, with ſome ſuch Spirituall perſon, (who may be learned) as ſhall haue ariued, thus farre. And if he tell you, that all is well, you may conceaue, that God hath ſayd it to you; and eſteem it, as a great benefit, from his Diuine Maieſtie; for you will, in tract of time, reioyce (as I haue ſayd) very much, to vnderſtand in cleare manner, what it is; though now, whilſt you haue the grace to enioy it, he allowes you not the Fauour, to vnderſtand it ſo. But, as his Diuine Maieſtie hath giuen you the firſt part, which is the enioying: ſo you will afterward, perhaps, by your knowledge, and learning, come alſo to vnderſtand it, by this meanes. Let him be adored, and praiſed, for the eternitie of all eternities, Amen.

THE

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER

She treats of the Fourth Degree of Prayer. She beginnes heer to declare, in excellent manner, the great dignitie, to vvhich our Lord aduances that Soule, vvhich is exalted to this State. It ſerues to animate men much, to endeauour, that they may ariue to ſo high a condition, ſince it may be obtained in this vvorld, through the goodnes of our Lord, though it cannot be deſerued. Let this be read, vvith conſideration, and care.

I Beſeech our Lord, that he will teach me, how to vſe ſome words, and way of ſpeech, which may enable me, to ſay ſomewhat, of this Fourth Water; for I well diſcerne, that I haue need enough of his Fauour heerin; euen yet more, then I had in that of the laſt; becauſe in that, the Soule doth find her ſelfe, not to be wholy dead; and ſo we may very well ſay, that ſhe is not dead, becauſe ſhe remaines ſtill in the world; but ſtill (as I affirmed) ſhe hath ſufficient vnderſtanding, to know, that ſhe is ſtill, heer; and that ſhe findes the Solitude, wherein ſhe is; & ſerues her ſelf, to ſome proportion, of the exteriour; at leaſt ſo farre, as, by outward ſignes, to giue that, which ſhe feeles,

to be vnderstood. In all that kind of Prayer, and in the manner also of it, which hath been described, the Gardner labours to some proportion; though yet, in the Prayer of these latter kindes, his labour goes accompanied with so much ioy, and such a happie kind of ease, as that, for his part, he findes no trouble at all, in it; for he considers it not as Trouble, but as Glorie; and he would be glad, that it might neuer end. But in this Fourth Degree, or kind of Prayer, there is no suffering left at all, but only enioying; though yet, without anie distinct particular vnderstanding, of what is enioyed. He knowes well enough; that a certaine Good, is enioyed, wherein all good things are contained, and shut-vp; but yet this Good, is not totally comprehended by him. All the Senses are taken vp, vpon the finding, and feeling of this ioy; in such sort, as no one of them, is so dis-employed, as that it can possibly attend to anie thing els, either in the exteriour, or interiour way. Before, a certaine leaue, or libertie was giuen to these Powers, that they might be able, to make some kind of demonstration, of the great ioy, they felt; but heer, the Soule enioyes much more, beyond comparison; and can giue her self also to be vnderstood, much lesse. Because there is no meanes left in the Bodie; nor yet hath the Soule anie at all, wherewith to communicate that ioy; but, all things would then, be disturbance, and euen torment to her; yea, and distraction, from the entirenes of her sweet repose.

I say,

I say, the Soule is no way able, to communicate the ioy she hath, if indeed there be an absolute, and entire Vnion, of all the three Powers togeather, for as long as that Vnion lasts; and that also, if she be able to communicate it, I say, there is no absolute Vnion. In what manner this thing happens, which they call Vnion, and what the thing also is, I am not able to giue to be vnderstood. It is declared in that, which they call Mysticall Theologie; but as for me, I am not able, so much as to name euen the tearmes. Nor doe I know, what that is, which is called *Minde*; nor the difference between *Minde*, and *Soule*; nor what also, is *Spirit*; for, to me, all these seuerall things, seem to be but one; though yet the Soule, now and then, spring-vp euen out of her self, as if it were a kind of fire, which is burning vp, in a flame; and sometimes this fire encreases, with a kind of impetuositie. Now this flame, rises very much higher, then doth the fire; but yet still, notwithstanding all that, it is no distinct thing, from the verie fire; but it is the flame it self, which still, is in the fire. Your Reuerence will vnderstand this matter, by your learning; but as for me, I know not, how to declare it better. For my part, the thing, which I pretend to declare, is, what the Soule finds, and feeles, when it is in this Diuine Vnion; for, as for the knowing, what an Vnion, in generall, is, it is euerie where vnderstood, well enough, to be, when two seuerall things, become one.

O my

O my deare Lord! and how good art thou? Blessed be thou for euer; and let all things praise thee, O my God, who hast been pleased, to loue vs in such sort, as that we may be able, to speake with truth, of this kind of communication, which thou vouchsafest to hold with Soules, euen in this banishment of ours; which, although they were neuer so holie, and good, yet this latitude of liberalitie, and magnificence of thine, were great, in proceeding with them after this manner. But, in fine, it is all thine owne Maiestie, and Greatnes, who giuest, after the rate, of what thou art. O infinit latitude of Bountie! and how magnificent are thy workes? They are able, euen to amaze anie such person, as hath not his Vnderstanding wholy employed, vpon the things of this world; and who hath left himself no roome, both for the knowing, and considering such things, as are reall truths. But now, that thou shouldst be pleased, to fasten such Soueraine Fauours vpon Soules, which haue offended thee so much, doth really, euen make an end of my verie Vnderstanding; and when once, I come to consider of this proceeding of thine, I am euen vnable to passe on, anie further. But indeed, how can anie Creature goe anie whither, in this case, which shall not be, a meer comeing back againe; since no Soule can euer know, how to giue thee anie tolerable thankes, for so incomparable Fauours? As for me, I help my self sometimes, with speaking certaine impertinencies, which haue neither head, nor foot; and it often

happens

happens to me, both when I come from receauing theſe Fauours, and when alſo our Lord is beginning to impart them (for, as for the verie time, when I am enioying them, I haue already ſhewed, that there is then, no power at all, to doe anie thing) that I expreſſe my ſelf to his Diuine Maieſtie, much after this manner: O Lord, conſider well, what thou doſt; forget not my ſo very greiuous Sinnes, ſo very ſoone; and though thou haue forgotten them, ſo farre, as to vouchſafe to forgiue them, yet remember them alſo (I humbly beſeech thee) ſo farre, as to make thee put ſome limits vpon thoſe Fauours, which thou art pleaſed to beſtow vpon me. Powre not, O my Creatour, ſo pretious a liquour as that, into ſo broken a veſſell as this; ſince already, thou haſt ſeen, how often I haue ſcattered, and ſpilt it. O lodge not, and truſt not, ſuch a treaſure as this, where the appetite, and affection, to all the conſolations of this life, is not yet ſo totally loſt, and ſpent, as it ought to be; for, if thou doe, it will be vtterly waſted. How canſt thou find in thy hart, to deliuer the ſtrength of this Cittie, and euen the verie keyes of the Fort, into the hands of ſuch a cowardlie Commander, who is likelie not to faile, to giue the Enemie entrance, vpon the firſt Aſſault, which he ſhall make. Let not, O my Eternal King, thy loue to me, be ſo great, as that it ſhould make thee put ſuch pretious Iewels as theſe, into hazard. And to me, it ſeemes, O my Lord, that thou mayſt giue the world occaſion

heerby,

heerby, to vndervalue theſe great Fauours of thine; ſince thou putteſt them into the cuſtodie, and power, of a Creature, who is ſo wicked, ſo baſe, ſo weake, ſo miſerable, and of ſo little worth, in anie kinde. Who, though I now beginne to labour, that I may not vtterly looſe them, through thy fauour (which alſo hath no need to be little, conſidering, what kind of thing I am) ſhall yet be neuer able, to gaine anie other Creature to thee, by meanes thereof. In fine, I am a woeman, and no good woeman, but a very wicked one; and it ſeemes, that theſe Talents of thine, are thus, not only to be hidden, by this meanes, but euen to be quite buried vp; ſince thou putteſt them into ſo vngratious, and vnluckie a Soyle. Thou art not wont, O Lord, to impart ſuch Fauours, and Greatneſſes as theſe, to anie Soule, but when there may be hope, that ſhe will be able to gaine manie others, to thy Seruice. And thou knoweſt, O my God, already, that I haue, ſometimes, begged this Fauour; and ſtill I begg it of thee, with my whole hart, and with the entire affection thereof; and I am reſolued to thinke it fitt, to be content, to looſe the higheſt bleſſing, which can poſſibly be enioyed vpon earth, to the end, that thou maiſt vouchſafe it to ſome other, who will profit more by it; that ſo, thine owne glorie may be encreaſed.

Both theſe, and ſuch other things, as theſe, hath it occurred to me, to vtter manie times; but yet afterward, I perceaued mine owne great follie heerin, togeather with my little humilitie;

for

for, our Lord knowes very well, what is fitteſt for euerie Creature; and, that there was not to be ſtrength enough, in my Soule, whereby ſhe might euer grow, to be ſaued, if his Diuine Maieſtie had not enriched her, with ſo great Fauours.

But I alſo now pretend to declare, the graces, and effects, * which remaine by this Prayer, in the Soule; and what that is, which ſhe may be able to doe, of her ſelf; and, if ſhe may, anie way, conduce, towards the bringing her ſelf, to this high State. It happens, that this Eleuation of the Spirit, or Vnion, come, both of them, with a Celeſtiall kind of Loue. For (according to my way of vnderſtanding) this * Vnion, is a different thing, from Eleuation; though yet the Soule be eleuated, in this verie Vnion. Whoſoeuer hath not tried, and felt this laſt, will be of a different conceipt; but yet, in my opinion, though euen it ſhould be all one, yet our Lord workes therin, after a different manner; And, by the encreaſe, which the Soule hath, of being able to vntye her ſelf from the loue of all Creatures, ſhe ſeemes to be very much greater, in that Flight, and Eleuation of the Spirit. And I haue clearly ſeen, that this is a diſtinct, and particular Fauour, although the things themſelues, may be all one, as I ſay; or at leaſt, may ſeem ſo. But a ſmall fire, is as truly, and really, Fire, as a great one; and yet ſtill, we ſee difference enough, between the one, and the other; for, before a little iron can be able to be made red hot, in a ſmall fire, a good ſpace of time will

* *The great effects of this high Prayer.*

* *The difference betvvee Eleuatiõ, and Vnion.*

will be ſpent; but now, if the fire be great, the iron, though it be alſo great, will looſe the apparance of iron, very quickly. Iuſt ſo, doth it ſeem to me, to happen in theſe two ſorts of Fauours from our Bleſſed Lord; and I know, that whoſoeuer may euer haue ariued, to be in Rapt, will vnderſtand me well; but ſuch as haue had no experience therin, will hold all that, to be impertinent, which I haue ſayd. Perhaps alſo it is ſo indeed; and ſo, as he will haue had reaſon, who beleiues it. For, how ſhall ſuch a thing, as I, preſume to ſpeake of ſuch a thing as this; and to giue ſome part of that, to be vnderſtood, which it ſeemes impoſſible, euen to beginne to declare, with anie words? So that it is not ſtrange, a whitt, if I talke idly. But yet I beleiue this, of our Bleſſed Lord (becauſe his Diuine Maieſtie knowes, that, next to this act of Obedience, my intention is no other, then to make Soules, euen, as it were, gluttonous, after the obtaining of ſo high a good) that he will be pleaſed, to aſſiſt me heerin; and I am ſure, I will ſay nothing, whereof I haue not had much experience. And it is a reall truth, that when I beganne to write of this Water, I conceaued it to be a more impoſſible thing, for me to treat of it, then to ſpeake Greeke; ſo very hard, did I finde it. Vpon this, I gaue it ouer, and went to receaue the Bleſſed Sacrament. But our Lord be euer praiſed, who doth ſo great Fauours to ignorant perſons. O vertue of Obedience, which art able to doe all things! For, Almightie God did illu-

illuminate my vnderſtanding; ſometimes, by helping me to the verie expreſſe words, which I was to vſe; and, at other times, by repreſenting the manner to me, how I ſhould declare the thing; So that, as his Diuine Maieſtie was pleaſed to doe, in the former Degree of Prayer, it ſeemes, that he will alſo heer declare, what I neither can, nor know, how to expreſſe. But that which now I ſay, is a moſt literall truth; and ſo, that which ſhall be good, is his inſtruction, and doctrine; and whatſoeuer falls-out to be ill, it is cleare, that it proceeds, and flowes, from this deep Sea of miſcheif, and Sinne, which is my ſelf. And therefore I heer affirme, that if anie haue ariued to theſe points, and particulars of Prayer, wherein our Lord hath done ſo great Fauour, to this miſerable, and wretched Creature, (as it is likelie, that there are manie) if they ſhall be pleaſed, to treat of theſe things with me, as conceauing, that I am miſtaken, and out of the way, our Lord will ſo aſſiſt this poore Seruant of his, as that ſhe may be able, to goe forward, to vphold this truth.

But now, to ſpeake of this laſt Water, which comes from Heauen, to ſatisfye, and euen fulfill the whole Garden, by the abundance therof; if our Lord did neuer forbeare to giue it, whenſoeuer there were need, it is euident enough already, of what eaſe it would be to the Gardner, and that there would neuer be anie Winter, but alwaies moſt temperate weather; nor would there euer, be anie want, either of Fruits, or Flowers;

Flowers; and so it may be easily seen, in what delight he would remaine. But, as long as we liue in this world, this condition is a kind of impossible thing; and we must alwaies be in care, that whensoeuer we shall want one of the Waters, we may procure another. This last, which falls from Heauen, comes downe sometimes, euen when the Gardner thinkes of it least. True it is, that these things are almost euer wont to happen, after a long exercise of Mentall Prayer. For, our Lord vses to come, by degrees, to catch this poore little Bird; and to lodge it then, safely, in the Nest; to the end, that it may rest, and repose. And after it had put it self long, vpon Flights, procuring, by the exercise of the Vnderstanding, and Will, and, in fine, by all the Powers it had, to goe in search of Almightie God, and to please him, he vouchsafes to allow it a reward, euen in this life; yea, and this, so very great a reward, that anie one little moment therof, may well suffice, as a full satisfaction, and retribution, for all that care, and trouble, which he could euer haue endured, in this world.

The Soule being thus, in search of Almightie God, doth find her self, as it were, euen sinke, vnder a sweet, and most excessiue delight; as being all, in a certaine way of deare faynting; so that the breath is euen beginning to faile, and so also, doth all corporall strength; in such sort, as that the Creature is now not able, so much, as to moue her hands, but with much paine. The eyes

are

are also closed, though without anie purpose to shut them; and when, by accident, they chance to be open, she, in effect, sees nothing distinctly; nor, if she reade, can she so much as iudge rightly of anie letter; nor can she euen guesse, how to name it right. She sees, that indeed, there are letters; but, the Vnderstanding not giuing her anie assistance, she knowes not how to reade, though she would. She heares, but yet vnderstands not, what she heares; so that she receaues no other benefit at all, by her Senses, but only, that they will not permit her, to take the full fruition of her delight; and so, vpon the matter, they doe her more hurt, then good. As for speaking, it is a vanitie, so much as to thinke of anie such thing; for she cannot possibly hitt right, so much as in framing anie one word; nor, if she were able to iudge it, were she yet possibly able, to pronounce it; in regard, that all the strength of her Bodie, is absolutly lost, for the greater encrease of that, of her Soule, that so, she may the better enioy her glorie. The exteriour delight also, which she feeles, is both great, and very certaine.

This Prayer puts the person to no manner of inconuenience in anie kinde, how long soeuer it may last; at least, it neuer put me to anie; nor am I able to remember, (when our Lord did me this Fauour) how sick, or weake soeuer I were, that I euer found my self the worse; but rather, with much improuement, euen in the way of health. But indeed, what hurt can euer be done to anie

Creature, by so great a blessing, as this? It is so knowne a truth, concerning the exteriour operations, that there can no doubt be made, but that there were naturally great occasions, for their alteration, since our Lord tooke all their strength from them, though yet it were with so great delight, that the same grew afterward, to be greater.

It is true, that in the beginning, this state, and feeling, is wont to passe away, in very short time; at least, it hapned so, to me. But, as for these exteriour signes, as also in this failing of operation in the Senses, it is not so easily to be giuen to be vnderstood, when things passe away in short time; but yet they are discerned with ease, by the excesse of the Fauours. For, the clearnes, and heat of the Sunne, must needs haue been then, very great, when all that, which came in the way, was so absolutly melted, and dissolued.

Let this also be well noted, that, in my opinion, how long soeuer that space of time might seem to be, wherein all the Powers of the Soule were in suspense, it must needs haue been indeed, very short; and, if it should ariue, to half an hower, it were very much. For my part, I thinke I was neuer so long. True it is, that one can hardly iudge, how long they are, since the Parties are depriued of outward sense: but I say, that it must needs be a very short time, wherein no one of the Powers, can be able to returne againe, to it self.

But now, the Will is, indeed, the onlie Power, which maintaines the Worke; for, as for the other

two,

two, they quickly become importunate vpon her. Yet the Will remaining quiet, and fixed, suspends them yet againe; and so they stay another little while; and afterward returne to liue, as before.

In this manner, some whole howers of Prayer, may be passed; yea and sometimes, they are passed so. For, when the two Powers of the Soule, haue tasted of that Celestiall wine, and beginne to be inebriated with it, they easily are induced to loose themselues, once againe, so to get still, the more, by the bargaine; and so they goe to accompanie the Will; and all three, come to be in the act of enioying. But this point of being totally lost, and so without framing anie Imagination at all (which Power, in my way of vnderstanding, is also wholy lost) I say, lasts but a very little time; though yet they come not alwaies, so wholy to themselues, vpon a suddaine, but that they may remaine, euen some howers, as in a kind of being, still, a little out of the way, and in disorder; Almightie God vouchsafing, to recollect them againe to himself, by little, and little.

And now let vs come to the interiour of that, which the Soule is wont to feele, at these times; and let them declare it, who know how; since it cannot be well vnderstood, and much lesse expressed. I was thinking, (when I disposed my self to write this, (as soone as I had receaued the B. Sacrament, and after the end of this verie kinde of Prayer, which now I write) of what the Soule did, at that time. And our Lord sayd this to me, in these

words: *It doth, my Daughter, dissolue, and defeat it self, to be so, the more ingulfed in me; for now it is no longer she, who liues, but I; And since she cannot cõprehend that, which she vnderstands, her very vnderstanding it, after a kind of Morrall way, which she doth, is really a not vnderstanding it, after a strict, & comprehensiue way, which she is not able to doe.* He who shall haue had triall of this, by experience, will be able to ariue to the expression of some part therof; but, as for me, I cannot deliuer that, more clearly, which passes heer, since it is so very obscure. I can only say, that, in this case, their being then, so close to Almightie God, is represented to them; and there remaines such a kinde of certaintie therof, that it cannot possibly faile, to be beleiued.

And now heer, all the Powers of the Soule fall short of operation, and are suspended, in such sort, that, by no meanes (as I haue sayd) it can possibly be vnderstood, that they worke. If she were thinking of some Mysterie, it is instantly so forgottẽ, as if there had neuer beẽ anie such thought. If she were reading, there is no remembrance of it; nor yet of pawsing; and if praying vocally, in like manner. So that now, this importunate little Gnatt of the Memorie, hath her wings burnt heer, and can now no longer spring-vp, nor stirre. The Will also, is now employed, all, in louing; though it vnderstãd not, how it loues. The Vnderstanding, if it vnderstand; it is not yet vnderstood, how it vnderstands; and, at least, it can comprehend nothing of that, which it vnderstands. To me, it

doth

doth not ſeem, that it vnderſtands; becauſe (as I was ſaying) it is not vnderſtood; and, for my part, I attaine not, to vnderſtand all this.

At the firſt, I chanced to be in ſo great an ignorance, as not to know, that Almightie God, was in all things; and conſidering, how very preſent, I conceiued him to be to me, it ſeemed impoſſible for me, to beleiue the cõtrarie. To leaue therefore to beleiue that he was there, I could not; becauſe it ſeemed to me, as it were, apparantly, and clearly, that I had vnderſtood his verie Preſence to be there. Some men, who were not learned, told me, that he was only there, by his Grace; which ſtill, I could not poſſibly beleiue; becauſe, as I was ſaying, I held him to be directly preſent otherwiſe; and thus I cõtinued, with ſome trouble. But, at length, a great learned man of the Order of the Glorious S. Dominick, freed me from this doubt; and told me, not only, that he was preſent, but that he alſo communicated himſelf to vs; which comforted me very much.

But now, it is heer to be noted, and vnderſtood, that this Celeſtiall Water, is alwaies a moſt eminent Fauour of our Lord, and giues the Soule exceſſiuely great aduantages; as I ſhall now declare.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

She prosecutes the same Discourse; and beginnes to declare the effects, vvhich this Degree of Prayer, vvorkes in the Soule. She perswades men earnestly, not to turne back, nor to giue-ouer their Prayer, though they should happen to fall, euen after they had receaued these Fauours. She speakes of the great harme, vvhich vvill ariue to them, if they doe othervvise. This Discourse is much to be noted; and it is of great consolation, for vveake persons, and Sinners.

THe Soule doth, in this Prayer, and Vnion, remaine with an excessiue kind of tendernes; in such sort, that she would faine, euen defeat, and dissolue her self; not through paine, or trouble, but by abundance of teares of ioy, wherein she is bathed, without so much, as feeling, or knowing, how, or when she wept them. It giues her a great delight, to find the impetuous force of that fire, appeased, and allayed by Water; which yet makes it encrease so much the more. This language of mine, may seem to be a kind of gibberidge; but yet, thus stands the case.

It hath hapned to me sometimes, when I was in

in this part of this Prayer, to be so * wholy out of my self, as that I knew not, whether I were awake, or asleep; or whether, in verie deed, I had been in that glorie, which I felt; and whether it were true, that I was indeed, so, all bathed in water, which distilled with such force, and speed, from mine eyes, that it seemed, as if a very Clowde of Heauen had rayned it downe; but, in fine, I found that it was no dreame. This hapned to be in the beginnings of this Prayer; and it passed quickly ouer. But the Soule remaines so couragious thereby, that, if it were possible for her to be cut into a thousand peices for God's sake, it would be of extreame consolation to her. And now, heer come in, all her promises; her heroicall resolutions; the liuelie efficacie of her desires; her beginning to abhorre the world; her clearlie discerning her owne vanitie; and all this, much more perfectly, and more highly, then it hapned in anie of her former Prayers. Her humilitie is also growne much stronger; for now, she very clearly discernes, that no diligence at all, of her owne, was anie peice of a cause, for bringing her that excessiue, and incomparable Fauour; not for making her enioy the same. She sees now clearly, that she is a most vnworthie Creature; for, in anie roome, where there enters a strong, and cleare Sunne-Beame, there is not the least, and thinnest Cobweb, which can lye hid. She now lookes very clearly, vpon her owne miserie; and now she is so very free from Vaine-Glorie, that it seems a kind

*She proceeds in declaring the great effects of this high Prayer.

of impoſſible thing, for her to haue anie; becauſe now already, ſhe hath it euen in her verie eye, how little ſhe is able to performe; or rather, in verie deed, that it is, iuſt nothing at all; and that, in this caſe, there was hardly ſo much, as anie cõſent of hers; but that it ſeems, that euen, whether ſhe would, or no, they ſhut the gates of all her Senſes, vp; to the end, that ſhe might ſo, the better enioy her Lord; and that now, ſince ſhe remaines all alone with him, what can ſhe haue to doe, but to loue him? She neither can ſee, nor heare, vnleſſe ſhe be made to doe ſo, as it were, by very ſtrong hand; and therefore, there is little, for which, to thanke her. Her former life, growes then, to be repreſented to her, with perfect truth; togeather with the great mercie of Almightie God. And all this, occurrs to her, without anie neceſſitie at all, that her Vnderſtanding should now, goe hunting after it. For there, doth she already find all this kind of food, readie dreſſed, for her, to vnderſtãd, and eat. Of her ſelf, she ſees very well, that she deſerues Hell-Fire; and that now, in ſtead therof, they giue her no other puniſhment, then glorie. And therefore ſhe doth now, euen conſume her ſelf, in the prayſes of Almightie God; and now would I be glad, euen to conſume my ſelf ſo. Bleſſed be thou, O my Lord, who haſt, in ſuch ſort, vouchſafed, to make ſo filthie a Fiſh-Pond, as I was, become ſo pure, and cleare a water, as that it may ſerue for thine owne Table. Be thou adored, and praiſed, O thou Regalo of the Angels, who haſt

haſt vouchſafed, thus to exalt ſo baſe a worme.

This profit of the Soule, remaines, for ſome time, therin; and now ſhe can already vnderſtand clearly enough, that the Fruit is none of her owne; and ſhe beginns to giue part of it to others, without euer feeling anie want of it her ſelf. She now beginns alſo, to giue ſignes, and apparances, of being the owner of ſome ſuch Soule, as is to be a Iewel-Houſe, fitt for the Treaſures of Heauen; and to carrie great deſires, of making others partake them; and humbly to beſeech Almightie God, that ſhe may not be alone, in poſſeſſing them. She beginns now, to profit her Neighbours, without almoſt vnderſtanding it her ſelf, and without her ſeeming to doe anie thing therin; but they, who receaue the benefit, vnderſtand it well. For already, doe thoſe Flowers yeild ſo high, and apparant a Sent, that it inuites all the world, to come neer them. They know, that ſhe hath great Vertues; and they ſee, that the Fruit is very tempting; and they would faine help her to eat it.

And now, if the earth of this Garden be manured, and digged-vp very deep, with Perſecutions, with Detractions, and with Sicknes; (as there are few, who ariue thus farre, without theſe things) and if alſo, it be very cleane ſtripped of all proper Intereſt, the Water ſinkes ſo very deeply, into this Soyle, that it will ſcarce be euer dry againe. But yet, if it be ſuch a kind of earth, as that (with being earth) it haue alſo, ſuch a

quantitie, and companie of thornes, as I remained with, in the beginning; and, if it want a rooting-out of the occasions of ill, and is not withall, so gratefull, as so high a Fauour requires, that Soyle growes againe, to be dry. And, in that case, if the Gardner proue negligent, and slack, and if our Lord, through his owne onlie goodnes, doe not againe resolue, to bestow raine vpon it, you may well giue this Garden, for destroyed, and lost. For iust thus, did it happen to me, seuerall times; and really, I am euen amazed, to reflect vpon it; yea, and it were not possible for me, to beleiue it, if the case had not been wholy mine owne.

But now I write thus much, for the comfort of such Soules, as are weake, like mine; to the end, that they may neuer despaire, nor so much, as once leaue, to haue confidence, in the greatnes of Almightie God; and that, * although they should fall, euen after our Lord had brought them, to so incomparable Fauours as are mentioned heer, they must not yet despaire, vnlesse they will be totally lost; for, there is nothing, which will not be gotten with teares; and so, the employing of one Water, will be the meanes of getting another.

* *A Cõsideration of strange comfort.*

One of the things, by which I haue been animated (with being that miserable Creature, which I am) to write this Discourse, and to giue this kind of account, of my wicked Life, and of the Fauours, which our Lord hath been pleased to doe me, (and that, not whilst I was seruing him,

him, but offending him) hath been this. And really, I wish now, that I were some person of great authoritie, that so I might be the better beleiued, in this particular; and I humbly beseech the Diuine Maiestie of my deare Lord, that he will bestow this Fauour vpon me. I say then, that no one, euen of those Creatures, who haue begunne, to vse Mentall Prayer, is to be dismayed with saying: If I should returne to be wicked againe, it would be worse for me, to goe forward with the vse of Prayer. For, the thing, which I beleiue, is, that it will be worse, if he giue-ouer his Prayer, and forbeare to reforme his life. But, if he shall not giue-ouer his Prayer, let him be confident, that it will bring him againe, to the Port, where he shall be able to see the Lanterne, and ariue safe. The Diuel made so feirce batterie against me, and I passed so long, without Prayer, (as conceauing, that, being so wicked, as I was, it would be an act of more humilitie, to desist from it) that I gaue it ouer, for about a yeare, and a halfe, or for a yeare at least; for, of the half yeare, I remember it not, so very precisely. But this was likelie to be, and was then, indeed, no other thing, then for me to put my self euen into Hell, without needing anie Diuels, for that purpose.

O my deare Lord, how great is that blindnes, and how vnhappily doth the Diuel hitt right, for his purpose, in laying so heauie a loade vpon vs, heerin? The Traytour knowes very well, that he hath lost that Soule, which continues, with perse-

uerance,

uerance, in Prayer; and that all those Falls, which he procures to giue vs, will but assist vs, through the goodnes of Almightie God, to make, afterwards, the greater leape, towards his Seruice. The Diuel, I say, knowes very well, how much this imports him. But, O my deare Iesus, what a thing it is, to see a Soule, in this State, falne-back * to Sinne, when yet thou, by thy mercie, dost lend him, that hand of thine, to rise againe? O, how will such an one, come to know, the multitude of thy greatnesses, and mercies; togeather with his owne miserie? Heer comes this Creature in, to vnderstand thy Maiesticall way; and to annihilate himself, in good earnest. Heer is the Soule, not once presuming, so much, as to lift her eyes vp, to Heauen, though yet she raise her thoughts, to consider the vnspeakable obligation, which she hath to thee. She heer, growes all deuoted, to the Queen of Heauen, that she may helpe to appease thee. Heer, she inuokes those Saints, who fell, after thou hadst once called them, to thy Seruice; to the end, that she may be assisted by them. Heer, she conceaues, and finds, that whatsoeuer Crosses thou send her, they are all of them, too easie, and light; because she sees already, that she deserues not the verie ground, vpon which she goes. Heer, enters the frequenting the Sacraments of the Church, and that vigorous Liuelie Faith, which now remaines in her hart, as seing the great power, and vertue, which God infused into it. The praising thee, for

** This is strange indeed.*

hauing

hauing left ſuch Vnguents, and other Medicines, for the cure of our Sores; which cloſe not only the skinne, but take them vtterly away. In a word, ſhe is amazed, at all theſe things; and who, O thou Lord of my Soule, is not to be amazed, at ſo great mercie, and at ſuch an ouerflowing kind of Fauour, vpon our Treaſons, which are ſo abominable, and fowle, that, for my part, I cannot vnderſtand, how my hart comes not, euen to ſplitt, when I write thus much; becauſe I find my ſelf ſo very wicked? And yet, the while, it ſeemes, as if I had a minde, to make thee a kind of recompence, & ſatisfaction, for ſo many fowle Treaſons, as I haue committed againſt thee, by theſe few, poore, little teares of mine, which yet are giuen mee, by thy ſelfe; and which really, for my part thereof, are but as ſo much water of a ſtinkeing Well. For, ſtill I am committing Sinnes, & procuring to fruſtrate, &, euen as it were, annihilate the Fauours, which thou haſt done me. But, be thou pleaſed, O my Deare Lord, to giue vallew to theſe poore teares, and doe thou purifye this ſo troubled Water of my Soule, though it ſhould be for no other reaſon, then only to keep men free, from the temptation of making raſh iudgements; as, for my part, I haue been ſubiect to this thought. Why, O Lord, doſt thou paſſe ouer thoſe other holie people, who haue alwaies ſerued, and ſuffered for thee; and haue been bred-vp, in the way of a Religious Life; and are, indeed, truly Religious; and not like me, who had

had no more therof, then the name; And yet, I clearly see, that thou didst them not those Fauours, which thou hast done me. But yet heer, I discerne very well, O thou my eternall Good, that thou keepest their reward in store, that so thou maist giue it them, all togeather; and that my weaknes, is so great, that I had need to be proceeded with, thus; whereas they, like gallant persons, are content, to serue thee still, without these helps; and so thou treatest them, as valiant people, who haue no interest of their owne.

But yet I, with all this, O my Lord, cryed-out manie times, before thee, excusing them, who murmured against me; because I thought, they had too much reason, for what they sayd. But this occurred to me, O Lord, when, already, through thy goodnes, thou with-heldst me, from offending thee so highly, anie more; and when I went diuerting my self from all that, which I thought might displease thee. For, when once I beganne to doe but thus much, thou also didst beginne to open thy Treasures, towards this Seruant of thine; and, it seemes, thou didst expect nothing els, but only, that there might be an inclination in me, to receaue them; so quickly didst thou beginne, not only to bestow them, but to be pleased, that the world should vnderstand it. When this was once perceaued, some beganne to hold a good opinion of me; though all had not yet knowne well, how ill I was; and that, much of it did then half appeare. But then, did Detraction,

traction, and Perſecution beginne, at a clapp; and, in my opinion, not without much cauſe. And therefore, I vndertooke no enmitie againſt anie Creature; but only beſought thy Diuine Maieſtie, to conſider, what little reaſon they had. They ſayd, that I had a minde, to make my ſelf a Saint; and that I inuented certaine Nouelties, though I had not ariued yet, by a great deale, to fulfill all myne owne Rule; nor ouertaken, in the way of vertue, thoſe manie good, and holie Religious Woemen, who were in that Monaſterie. Nor doe I thinke indeed, that I ſhall euer ariue ſo farre, (vnleſſe Almightie God, through his goodnes, will be pleaſed to performe it all, on his part) but rather, that I was likelie to aboliſh that, which was good, and to eſtabliſh certaine cuſtomes, which were not ſo; at leaſt, I did what I could, to introduce them; and I had alwaies power enough, to doe hurt. So that they blamed me, without anie fault of theirs; nor doe I ſay, that they were only Religious Woemen, but others alſo, who told me truth, becauſe it was permitted by thee.

When once I was ſaying my Office, I, who had ſometimes, been ſubiect to this temptation, came to this Verſe: *Iuſtus es, Domine, & rectum iudicium tuum*; *Thou art iuſt O Lord, and thy iudgement is right*; and I beganne to conſider, how true this was; for, in this kind, the Diuel had neuer power to tempt me, ſo farre, as to make me doubt, but that thou, O Lord, art the Owner, and Authour of

of all goodnes; no nor yet, in anie thing at all, which belongs to Faith. Nay rather it ſeemed to me; that the more they were aboue Nature, the more firmely did I belieue them; yea, and they cauſed euen more deuotion in me. And, in regard that thou art Omnipotent, all ſuch greatneſſes, as thou ſhouldſt be pleaſed to act, and execute, were reſolued vpon, and concluded in me; and of this, as I was ſaying, I neuer had doubt. So that, when I came afterward to conſider, how thou couldſt permit, that there ſhould be ſo manie deare Seruants of thine, as I was ſaying, who yet receaued not thoſe Fauours, and Regalos, which thou wert pleaſed, to vouchſafe me, (I being ſo miſerable a Creature, as I was) thou anſweredſt me thus, O Lord: *Doe thou ſerue me; and doe not trouble thy ſelf, vvith that.* Now, this was the verie firſt Word of that kind, which euer I perceiued thee to ſpeake to me; and therefore, it amazed me much; And I will, heerafter, declare this manner of vnderſtanding things; togeather with diuers others. I ſpeake not of it heer; for it were to goe from the purpoſe; and I belieue, I haue gone from it already; and, in effect, I ſcarce know, what I haue ſayd; nor can it indeed, well, be otherwiſe; but your Reuerence muſt needs beare with theſe interuals, and interruptions. For, when I once conſider, how much God endures at my hands, and, withall, behold my ſelf in this condition, it is not to goe for a ſtrange thing, that I looſe my ayme, both in that, which I ſay, and am

to

to say. And I beseech our Lord, that all my impertinencies, and roauings, may alwaies be of this kind; and that his Diuine Maiestie may not permit, that I may euer varie one haires breadth, from him, but rather, that I may be consumed, euen in this moment. For it may well be sufficient for me, to haue obserued, and discerned his great mercie, not once, but often, in that he hath been pleased, to pardon so great an ingratitude, as mine. He pardoned S. Peter once; but me, often; so that the Diuel had some kind of reason, to tempt me, as hopeing, that I would not pretend, to hold straight freindship with one, with whome I had been in so publique enmitie. But how great, O Lord, was this blindnes of mine? For, where could I euer thinke, O my Lord, to find anie remedie, but by thee? What a sensleſſe kind of follie, was it for me, to fly from the light, that so, I might, for euer, goe stumbling-on in the darke? What a foolish kind of proud Humilitie was that, which the Diuel inuented for me, when he perswaded me to depart, from leaning against that Staffe, and Pillar, * which might support me; that so, my Fall might not be so great? At this instant doe I blesse my self, with the Crosse; for, me thinkes, I neuer passed a danger, so very hazardous, in my whole life, as this inuention was, which the Diuel had a minde to teach me, by way of Humilitie. For, he put it into my conceipt, to thinke, how it could be possible, that so wicked a thing, as my self,

* *The strong Pillar of Prayer.*

hauing receiued so great Fauours, from Almightie God, could euer procure to come to Mentall Prayer; and that, for me, it would suffice, if I sayd those Vocall Prayers, to which I was bound; as others did; but that, since now I did not euen thus much, well, what sense was there, that I should pretend to doe more; and that this, was to expresse little reuerence to Almightie God, and to vnderualue his Fauours.

It was fitt, to thinke, and know all this; but to put it in execution, had been extreamly ill done. And be thou Blessed, O Lord, who broughtst me the remedie. For, this temptation seems to haue been no lesse, then a beginning to that other, which the Diuel brought vpon Iudas; but, that Traitour, the Diuel, durst not tempt me, so openly, but would faine haue come, by little and little, to set vpon me; as he did, vpon him.

And now, for the loue of our Lord, let all them, who vse Mentall Prayer, consider * that, which followes, very well. Let them know, that, during the time, when I forbore it, my life was much worse, then before. And let it be well considered, what a fine kind of remedie the Diuel brought me, and what a daintie ridiculous Humilitie, it must be, which could fill me, with so deep a disquiet. For indeed, how could this Soule of mine, appease it self? The ignorant, foolish Creature went away, as fast as she could, from her true repose, and rest. She had her Fauours, and Regalo's, present to her memorie; and she found,

* *Consider this very well.*

found, that the contentments of this world, were so loathsome, as euen almost to prouoke a Vomit. But I am amazed, how I could endure it; though belike, it was with some kind of hope, that, at the worst hand, I might be able to remaine free from Sinne; for, I neuer, as I remember, (though yet it be now, more then one & twentie yeares agoe) gaue-ouer a being resolued, to returne to Prayer. But, O, how ill-grounded, and addressed, was this hope of mine? For, the Diuel would faine haue turned me ouer, till the Day of Iudgement; that so, from thence, he might conduct me to Hell.

But yet now afterward, I frequenting Prayer, & Reading, which was indeed the way, to see reall Truths; & looking downe, vpon that wicked course, which I was holding; and often importuning our Blessed Lord, with manie teares, I was yet, so very wretched, that I knew not, by anie meanes, how to help my self. But then againe, on the other side, I growing to giue-ouer these good things, and employing my self vpon certaine idle pastimes; and exposing my self to manie occasions of ill; and enioying very few helps; (and I may rather venture to say, none at all, but only such, as might help mee to fall) for what, might I euer hope, but what I haue sayd? I beleiue, that a certaine Religious man of S. Dominick's Order, who was very learned, hath great merit, in the sight of God; for he awaked me out of this sleep. And he made me (as, I thinke, I haue already expressed)

receaue the B. Sacrament, euerie Forthnight. And so, my miserie being then, not altogeather so great, I beganne to come back againe into my self; though yet withall, I forbore not, to commit some offences against our Lord. But, becauſe I had not loſt my way, I went ſtill on, with falling, & riſing; though yet, but by little, and little. And he, who neuer giues-ouer to goe forward, will ariue at length, by going ſoftly, though it be late. For my part, I conceaue, that, for a Soule to looſe her way, and to leaue her Prayer, is indeed but one, and the ſelf ſame thing; and our Lord deliuer vs from it, for his owne Mercies ſake.

It is, heervpon, to be inferred, (and I deſire, euen for the loue of our Lord, that it may be much obſerued) that, although a Soule ſhall come to ſuch paſſe, as that our Lord may doe her great Fauours, in Prayer, ſhe muſt not yet, be confident of her ſelf, ſince ſhe may yet, come to fall againe. And let her not, by anie meanes, expoſe her ſelf to * occaſions of Sinne. Let her be carefull, to conſider thus much; for, the deceipt, of which the Diuel is wont to ſerue himſelf, in this occaſion, is very great. For, though the Fauour, which was imparted to the Soule, were moſt certainly from Almightie God, yet the Traytour will not faile to ſerue himſelf of that verie Fauour, in whatſoeuer he can; and eſpecially, for the diſaduantage of perſons, who are not ſtrong in vertue, and mortification; nor are abſolutly vntyed, and looſe, from all things, belonging to this

* *Take heed.*

this world. For, men, in fine, must know, that they are not, by meanes of this Prayer, sufficiently strengthned, and fortifyed (as I will declare afterward) for the putting themselues into occasions, and dangers; how great desires, and resolutions soeuer, they may haue.

This is an excellent Doctrine; and it is not mine, but taught by Almightie God himself; and so I shall be glad, that all ignorant persons, like me, may learne it. For, though a Soule be neuer so high, in this State, yet must she not trust her self so farre, as to goe out, to combat; but she will haue acquitted her self well, if she can defend her self. So that, in this State, and condition, it will be necessarie for her, to carrie Defensiue Armes, against the Diuel; for yet, she hath not strength enough, wherewith to assault him; and much lesse, to tread him vnder foot; as yet, they will be able to doe, who shall find themselues, in that State; whereof I will discourse afterward. But this, is that deuise, and cosening-Trick, wherby the Diuel is wont to take vs; That, when once he sees a Soule ariue to be so very neare to our Lord, and which can iudge so very well, of the difference, between the blessings, which belong to this life, and the next; and of the Loue, which our Lord beares to that Soule; from this very Loue, he makes such a kind of confidence, and securitie grow, as that she shall neuer, forsooth, be able to fall from that, which she is enioying, at that time. And she also seemes, there-vpon, to eye her

reward, so very clearly, that she is easily brought to hold it, euen impossible for her, to quitt that, which is so very delightfull, and gustfull, euen in this life; for so base, and filthie a thing, as worldlie pleasure is. Now, by meanes of this vaine confidence, doth the Diuel grow to depriue her, of the distrust, which otherwise she would haue, of her owne strength; and thus, she exposes her self, as I was saying, to danger; and beginnes, with a foolish kind of good zeale, to be giuing the Fruits of her Garden, away, to others, without anie limits; as beleiuing now, that she hath no more cause, so to be afrayd, concerning her self; and that this, is not, forsooth, out of pride (for, the Soule vnderstands well enough, that she is able to doe nothing, of her self) but through the much* confidence, which she hath, in Almightie God. Yet all this, is without discretion; because she doth not well consider, that she hath not yet, mewed all her owne sick-feathers. She may well stopp out of her Nest; yea, and Almightie God himself, will, perhaps, take her, now, and then, out, from thence. But she is not yet, fitt for a Flight, because her vertues are not yet growne to be of full strength; nor hath she yet, experience, for the knowledge of dangers; nor doth she yet, vnderstand the mischeif, which growes, by putting too much trust, in her owne forces.

** A most dangerous temptation.*

And now, this is that, which destroyed me; and both for this, and for all things, there will be great necessitie, of a Directour; and of conuersation

tion with persons, who are spirituall, indeed. It is true, I am fully perswaded, that, when Almightie God doth once bring a Soule to this state, he will not leaue to fauour her, nor suffer her to perish; if she doe not very shamefully, and entirely, forsake, and forbeare, to serue his Diuine Maiestie. But yet, if it should so happen, that she fall, let her consider, and consider againe, (euen for the loue of our Blessed Lord) and take heed, that the Diuel deceaue her not, so farre, as to make her giue-ouer her Prayer, as he did me, vnder the pretence of false Humilitie; as I haue declared; and, as I would fayne repeat, very often. But, let her trust in the goodnes of Almightie God, which is greater, then all the sinnes, which we can commit; and let her hope, that he will not remember our ingratitude, when once we, reflecting duly vpon our selues, desire to returne againe to his friendship; nor euen * so farre consider the Fauours, which he hath done vs, as to make vs be punished for them; but that rather they will help to obtaine pardon for vs; so much the sooner, as for persons, who haue belonged to his House, and haue had the honour to eat (as men vse to say) of his bread. Let them remember his words; and consider, how he hath proceeded with me, who euen wearied my self, with offending his Diuine Maiestie, before he would forbeare, or faile, to pardon me. For, he neuer growes vnwilling to giue; nor is it euer possible, to draw his Mercies dry; and so, let not vs be

* *Consider, and admire this passage.*

wearie of euer receauing Fauour, at his hands. Let him be blessed for euer, Amen; and let all creatures praise him.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER

Wherein she treats of the difference, betweeen Vnion, and Rapt; and declares, what kind of thing a Rapt is. She speakes also, of the blessing, which that Soule hath, which our Lord, through his goodnes, brings thither; and of the Effects, which Rapts vse to produce. This Discourse is of much admiration.

I Would be glad to know, how to declare (through the Fauour of Almightie God) the difference, which there is, between Vnion, on the one side; and Rapt, and Flight, (as they are wont to call it) of Spirit, on the other; for, these two latter, doe signifye, in substance, but one thing; and it is also called Extasis. The aduantage is very great, which belongs to Rapt, beyond Vnion; and the effects also, which it produces, are much greater; and it hath also manie other operations. For, meer Vnion, seemes to be alwaies, after the same manner; both in the beginning; in the middle; and in the end; and it is alwaies, in the interiour part. But now, as Rapts are Visitations of the Soule, which vse to be of a higher Straine, they

they are wont to produce their Effects, not only interiourly, but exteriourly also. I humbly beseech our Blessed Lord, that, as he hath vouchsafed to declare the rest, so he will also vouchsafe to doe this; for certainly, if his Diuine Maiestie had not been pleased to giue me to vnderstand, by what meanes, & in what manner, it might be done, I should not possibly haue knowne, which way to turne my hand.

Let vs therefore now consider, that this last Water, whereof we haue spoken, is so very plentifull, and abundant, that, if it were not, because the Soyle of the Garden cannot consent to receaue it, we might beleiue, that the verie Clowd it self, of that great Maiestie, were heer, rayning it self downe, vpon this earth. And so, when we are gratefull to our Lord, for this great blessing, acknowledging the same, by our good workes, according to the vttermost of our power, our Lord catches-vp * that Soule (as a man may say) euen iust so, as the clowdes snatch vp the vapours, from the earth; and so, taking her wholy vp, from the same earth, the clowd rises vp to Heauen, and carries the same along, with it self; and shewes her certaine things, belonging to that Kingdome, which is prepared for her. I know not, whether this Comparison will be thought to suite well, with that, whereof I am speaking; but I am sure, that, in realitie of truth, it passes thus. In these Rapts, it doth not seem, that the Soule doth euen animate the Bodie;

* *The manner & nature of Rapts.*

and ſo, the Bodie it ſelf, remaines with a kind of trouble, and defect, through the want of that naturall heat, which belongs to it; and it goes, all cooling it ſelf, though yet, with an exceſſiue ſweetnes, and delight. There is heer, no meanes at all, to reſiſt; though in Vnion (we being then, as in our owne Countrie) there is ſome remedie; and ſo (though it be not without ſuffering a kind of paine, and vſing ſome force) it may alwaies, in effect, be employed. But heer, for the moſt part, there is no remedie, at all; nor anie helpe; but, manie times, the thing ariues, without our being ſo much as able to preuent the coming of it, euen by our very thought. And there growes to be, ſuch a ſpeedie, and ſtrong kind of impetuoſitie, that you feele, and find this Clowd to raiſe it ſelf inſtantly vp; or rather, that this ſtrong Eagle takes you, and carries you quite away, between her wings. And I ſay, it is vnderſtood, and you find your ſelf to be carried away, though you know not, whither. For, howſoeuer the thing happen to be with delight, yet ſo great is the weaknes of our naturall condition, that it puts vs into ſome feare, in the beginning. And therefore, it will be neceſſarie, in this caſe, for the Soule, to be much more couragious, and reſolute, then for all thoſe occaſions, which were precedent. For heer, ſhe muſt be content to hazard all, and to leaue her ſelf wholy, in the hands of Almightie God; and to goe, whitherſoeuer ſhe ſhall be carried;

carried; and this, with a very good will; for, in fine, they will be sure to carrie her, whether she will, or no; and that, with so great extremitie of strength, and speed, that, howsoeuer I had a minde, very, very often, to resist it, yea, and that I employed all the strength I had, to that purpose, (and especially, at some particular times, when things fell out, to happen, in publique; yea, and at manie other times also, when they were priuate; for I was then, in doubt, and feare, least I might be abused, and deceiued) it was yet but seldome, that I was able to preuaile, to some small proportion. But it cost mee a very great deale of harrassing, & wearines, to my self, iust so, as if some ordinarie person had been fighting with some strong Giant; & afterward I should finde my self very weary. But at other times, it was altogeather impossible for me to hinder it; for, my Soule would be carried absolutly away, and ordinarily, euen my head, as it were, after it; yea & this, sometimes, so farre, as that my whole Bodie would be transported so, as to be raised-vp from the ground. This last, hath happened rarely to me; but once it was vpon the very point to ariue, whilst we all, were assembled togeather, in the Quire; and I being then, vpon my knees, (as at the point of going to receaue the Blessed Sacrament) it put me to an extremitie of trouble; becausе it seemed to be a very extraordinarie thing, and that instantly, there would be much note of it; and so I commanded my Religious-woemen (for at that time,

time, I was growne to be Prioreſſe) that they ſhould not ſpeake of it, to anie creature. But, at other times, when I beganne to diſcerne, that our Lord was going about, to doe the ſame, againe, (and once, in particular, when diuers principall Ladies were preſent; and it was vpon the Feaſt of our Vocation, when there was a Sermon) I did euen ſpread my ſelf, all along, vpon the ground; and though the Religious woemen came then about me, to keep my Bodie downe, yet the thing was eaſily perceiued. Vpon this, I humbly prayed our Lord, in moſt particular manner, that, by no meanes, he would doe me anie ſuch Fauours, as might carrie anie of theſe exteriour demonſtrations, with them; for, already, I was very wearie of being neceſſarily ſo warv, and watchfull ouer my ſelf; for that ſuch kind of Fauours, could not poſſibly be done me, by his Diuine Maieſtie, but ſo, that euerie bodie, would come to know it. And it ſeemes, that, through his goodnes, he hath been pleaſed to heare my Prayer; for, ſince that time, I neuer had anie Rapts of that kinde, and to that proportion; but it is true, that it is not long, ſince I had the laſt.

But yet now, ſo it is, that when I had a minde to reſiſt theſe Rapts, there ſeemed to be ſomewhat of ſo mightie force, vnder my feet, which raiſed me vp, that I know not, to what to compare it; but it came with much more impetuoſitie, then anie of theſe other things of Spirit; and ſo, I was euen torne, as it were, to peices; for, the combat,

combat, and ſtrife, is great; but, in fine, all helped little; for, when our Lord hath a minde to doe anie thing, no power is able to ſtand againſt it. At other times, he is pleaſed to content himſelf, with letting vs ſee, that he is diſpoſed, to doe vs that Fauour, and that there is no auerſion, in his Diuine Maieſtie; and that we, oppoſing our ſelues, for Humility's ſake, there follow yet, the ſelf-ſame Effects, as if we had wholy conſented.

Now, theſe * Effects are great. For firſt, the mightie power of our Bleſſed Lord, is made apparant thereby; and that, when his Diuine Maieſtie is pleaſed to diſpoſe of things otherwiſe, we are no more able to detaine our Bodies, then our Soules; nor are we Lords therof; but we muſt, in deſpight of our harts, acknowledge, that there is a Superiour; and that theſe Fauours come from him; and that, of our ſelues, we can doe nothing, in nothing; and ſo, a great impreſſion of Humilitie, is made vpon the Soule, by this meanes. And further, I confeſſe, that it bred alſo a great feare in me, (and, at the firſt, an extreame great one) to ſee, that a maſſie Bodie ſhould be taken-vp from the earth. For, though the Spirit be that, which drawes it after it; and though it be with great ſuauitie, and delight, (if it be not reſiſted) yet our Senſes are not loſt thereby; at leaſt I, for my part, was ſo perfectly in my Senſes, that I was able to vnderſtand, that I was raiſed. There doth alſo, heerby, appeare ſo great a Maieſtie in him, who can doe this, that it makes, euen the verie

The Effects of Rapts.

haire

haire of the head, ſtand on end; and there remaines a mightie feare, to offend ſo great a God; but yet ſo, as that it is wrapped vp, in an exceſſiue kind of loue, which ſhe beginns to conceaue, euen newly, and freshly againe, towards him, whome she finds, to carrie ſo great a loue to ſuch rotten wormes, as we are. For now he ſeemes not content, with drawing the Soule only to himſelf, in ſo particular, and ſo certaine a manner, but that he will needs alſo, draw the verie Bodie too, euen whilſt it is ſo very mortall, and compoſed of ſo filthie earth, as we haue made it, by our Sinnes. This alſo leaues, in the Soule, a very ſtrange kind of looſning, and caſting it ſelf off, from all the things of this world; whereof I know not, how to expreſſe well, what it is; but, me thinkes, I may well ſay, that it is not only, in ſome ſort, a different, but alſo a greater kind of thing, then thoſe others, which worke vpon the onlie Spirit, import. For though, in thoſe other Viſitations alſo, there be a kind of totall vntying, and looſning it ſelf from all things, for as much as concernes the Spirit; yet heer, it ſeemes, our Lord is pleaſed, that euen the Bodie alſo it ſelf, ſhall put this point, in practiſe. And it breeds, in anie Creature, ſuch a new kind of ſhyneſſe, and miſlike, in order to the things of this world, that it makes euen our verie life, much the more painefull to vs. It giues alſo ſuch another* paine, as we can neither tell, how to procure, when we haue it not; nor free our ſelues from the ſame, when we haue it. And I would

* *The ſtrangeſt ſtate of Minde, vvhich perhaps is deſcribed in the vvhole Booke.*

would be extreamly glad, to be able, to giue this, to be vnderſtood; but, I belieue, I ſhall not know, how to doe it; though yet, I will ſay ſomewhat, if I be able.

But now, it is to be noted, that theſe things come vpon me, when I am, as it were, in the verie Euening of the day, after all thoſe Viſions, and Reuelations, whereof I will write; & after the time, when I vſed to hold that Prayer, wherein our Lord was wont to allow me ſo great Regalo's, and guſts. And though yet theſe things doe not ceaſe with me, at ſome times, yet doth this Paine, more often, and more vſually ſeaze vpon me, which I will now declare. It hath ſometimes, of the more; and ſometimes, of the leſſe; and now I will apply my ſelf, to ſpeake of it, as when it hath of the more. For, though I will treat heerafter, of thoſe great impetuoſities, which they vſed to bring vpon me, before our Lord was pleaſed to giue me thoſe Rapts; yet they had, in my opinion, no more to doe, by way of Compariſon, one with another, then there is, between things Corporall, and Spirituall. And I beleiue, that I doe not exaggerate the matter, a whitt, by ſaying ſo; becauſe that Paine ſeemes to be ſuch, as that, although the Soule doe feele it, yet it feeles it, togeather, vvith the Bodie; and ſo, both of them, participate therin. And it is not alſo, with that extremitie, of being, as it were, abandoned, and vtterly forſaken; which yet abounds in this; wherein, as I was ſaying, we haue no part at all, our ſelues. But, there often comes a kind

kind of desire, vnseasonably, and vnexpectedly, vpon vs; and I know not, from whence it moues. And, vpon this desire, which penetrates the whole Soule, euen at one verie instant, she beginnes to afflict, and euen belabour her self so, as that she rises much aboue her self; and indeed, aboue whatsoeuer is created; and Almightie God is pleased, to make her so very desolate, & disgusted, in order to all temporall things, that, how much soeuer she may labour, and endeauour to the contrarie, there is nothing in this world, which will either accompanie her, or whereby she would be glad to be accompanied, but euen directly to dye, in that Solitude. For, if anie bodie speake to her, or if she would employ all the power, which possibly she might haue, to speake to others, it serues to very little purpose; for, her Spirit (doe what she can) doth still, not depart, from making her find her selfe, to be perfectly alone. And though it seem to me, as if Almightie God were then, extreamly remote from her; yet, at times, he communicates his greatnesses to her, by a manner, the most highly strange, that can be imagined; yea and more strange, then can possibly be expressed. Nor doe I beleiue, that anie other creature will either beleiue it, or can vnderstand it; but only some such person, as may haue felt it. For, this is no communication, to giue comfort; but only to shew the reason, which that person hath, to be afflicted, and distressed, for being absent from that Good, which comprehends all good things, in it

self.

ſelf. By meanes of this communication, both the deſire doth encreaſe, and ſo alſo, doth the extremitie of that Solitude, wherein the Soule findes her ſelf; togeather with a certaine paine, which is ſo very delicate, and penetratiue (the Soule being placed then, in that kind of Deſert) that it may expreſly, and euen literally, ſeem to be, at that time, that verie thing, whereof the Royall Prophet ſpoke, when he was, in the ſame verie Solitude. Saue that, our Bleſſed Lord would vouchſafe the ſenſe of thoſe things, to him, and make him feele it, being a Saint, after a more perfect manner. But the words, whereof I ſpeake, were theſe: *Vigilaui, & factus ſum ſicut paſſer ſolitarius in tecto. I haue vvatched, and am become like a ſolitarie Sparrovv, vpon the topp of a Houſe.* For ſo doth that Verſe repreſent it ſelf to me, at thoſe times, that, me thinkes, I doe euen ſee mine owne condition, therin. And it comforts me to obſerue, that others haue alſo found themſelues, in ſo high an extremitie of Solitude; and eſpecially, when they were ſuch perſons, as the Royall Prophet was. So that, me thinkes, this kind of Soule, is not then, it ſelf; but rather vpon the verie topp, or ridge, as one may ſay, therof; yea, and of all things alſo, which are created; for then, mee thinkes, the Soule remaines, in the very higheſt, and moſt ſuperiour part of her ſelf.

At other times, the Soule ſeemes to find her ſelf, in that occaſion, as in the verie extremitie of neceſſitie, and miſerie; and that then, ſhe is ſaying,

and asking her ſelf this queſtion: *VVhere is nowe thy God?* But now heer, it is to be noted, that, for my part, I knew not then, what thoſe words ſignifyed in the vulgar Toung; yet, when afterwards I came to know it, I was much comforted to ſee, that our Lord was pleaſed to bring them to my memorie, without anie procurement at all, of mine. At other times, I alſo called that Saying of S. Paul to minde: That *he vvas crucifyed to the vvorld.* I ſay not, that I was ſo; for I ſee but too well, that I am not; but me thinkes, the Soule, in this caſe, is very much after that manner; for, ſhe gets no comfort, either from Heauen, becauſe ſhe is not there; nor carries ſhe anie affection at all, to the Earth; nor is ſhe alſo there, but remaines, as if ſhe were euen crucifyed, between Heauen, & Earth; and ſuffering all the while, without receauing anie ſuccour, either from one of theſe places, or the other. For, that which comes to her from Heauen, (which is, as I haue ſayd before, but a notice of Almightie God, ſo admirable, aboue all that, which we know anie way, how to deſire) doth but ſerue for her greater torment, becauſe it multiplyes the ſame deſire, in ſuch ſort, that the exceſſiue paine therof, doth put her, in my opinion, euen paſt her ſenſes; ſaue that ſhe remaines ſo, but a very little while. Now this condition of minde, ſeemes to be no leſſe, then euen the verie agonie, and paſſage of death it ſelf; yet withall, there is ſo very great a contétment taken in this ſuffering, that I know not, to what, in fine, I may poſſibly be able

able to compare it. It is a feirce, and yet a ſauourie, and delightfull kind of Martyrdome; ſince all that, which concernes this world, and which it is poſſible, to repreſent to the Soule (yea though it were, euen the moſt delightfull Obiect, which euer ſhe had been accuſtomed to embrace) is by no meanes admitted, but is inſtantly, caſt ſharply away, from her. She vnderſtands alſo heer, very well, that ſhe cares for nothing at all, but Almightie God; and yet, ſhe conſiders no particular thing, euen in him; but she will haue him, all together; and yet, after a ſort, ſhe knowes not, what she would haue. I ſay againe, that she knowes not; becauſe her Imagination repreſents nothing at all, to her; yea and, in my opinion, during a great part of that time, wherein she is after that manner, the Powers of her Soule doe not worke that ioy, which vſes to be felt, both in the caſe of Vnion, and of Rapts; for they are wholy ſuſpended by her paine.

But O, that I were able to giue your Reuerence to vnderſtand this buſines, well; though it were, but, that you might ſo, make me know more particularly, what it is. For now, this is that, in which my Soule doth ordinarily moſt cõtinue; &, whenſoeuer I am not employed about ſomewhat, ſhe is put euen vpon theſe verie ſtraights, and agonie of death. She is afrayd, when ſhe ſees them beginne, for feare leaſt it ſhould coſt me my life; but yet when it is once begunne, ſhe would be glad, that, during all that life, which

might last, she might continue, in that state of sufferance; though yet still, it be so very excessiue, that the person is scarce able to endure it. For, sometimes, I am, in effect, without anie pulse at all, as my Sisters tell me, who then come towards me, to see what passes; for now they beginne a little, to vnderstand more, of the case. And the bones of my verie armes, to which the ioynts are fastned, grow then to be euen opened; and my hands are so starke, and stiffe, that I cannot possibly, sometimes, bring them togeather; and so the paine remaines, till the next day after, in my wrests, and in my Bodie, in such a manner, that it seems, as if I were euen racked, and disioynted. And I am sometimes conceauing, that our Lord may one day, perhaps, thinke fitt (in case this course goe on) to make it end, with the verie ending of my life. For, so great a torment as this, may well, in my opinion, be sufficient, for so great an effect, as that; saue only, that I deserue not, to be so happie.

All the anxietie of my desire, consists, at this time, that I may dye. For I neither remember Purgatorie, nor yet those great Sinnes, which I haue committed, for which I deserued Hell-Fire. But, all is now forgotten, through that anxietie of desire, and appetite, to see Almightie God; yea, and that vast Solitude, and Desert, wherein I am, at that time, seemes a much more desireable thing, then all the sweetest societie of this world. If anie thing were of power, to giue her cõfort, in this

this caſe, it would be, that ſhe might be able to treat with ſome one, who had endured the ſame torment; for now, though ſhe cõplaine therof, it ſeems, that no Creature can tell, how to beleiue her.

It alſo contributes to her torment, that this paine is ſo extreame, that ſhe would faine, neither be in Solitude, nor yet haue companie, as others haue; but only to haue the ſocietie of ſome ſuch perſons, as to whome, ſhe might be able to make her complaint. It is with her, in in this caſe, as with one, who euen hath the halter about his neck; and who, whilſt he is euen ſtrangling, endeauours, and would faine take his breath. For, iuſt ſo, me thinkes, doth this inclination to haue companie, ſeem, to be an effect of our naturall frailtie, and weaknes; that, as this exceſſiue paine ſeems to put vs to iminent danger of death, (for, it is certaine, that it doth all this; and I haue ſeen my ſelf, diuers times, in this danger, through my great ſickneſſes, and other occaſions; as I haue declared; and I will beleiue, that this may perhaps, proue to be as great, as anie of the reſt) ſo the deſire, and inclination, which, both the Bodie, and Soule haue, not to be parted, is that, which ſeekes ſuch a kind of ſuccour, as to take breath; and by expreſſing it ſelf, and diuerting, and complaining, ſeeks yet, for ſome meanes, how to liue againe, heer below; though ſtill, much againſt the will of the Spirit, or ſuperiour part of the Soule, which would faine not be quitt of this Paine.

I know not, whether I hitt right, in what I say, or if I know indeed, how to doe it; but to the vttermoſt, and beſt of my opinion, it paſſes iuſt thus, as I haue declared. And now, your Reuerence ſhall doe well, to conſider, what kind of reſt, or eaſe, it is poſſible for me to enioy, in this life; ſince that, which I was wont to find by meanes of Solitude, and Prayer (for therein, our Lord was pleaſed, to giue me great conſolations) is now moſt vſually conuerted into this torment; which yet, withall, is ſo delicious a kind of thing, and the Soule perceaues it to be of ſo high value, that now, ſhe delights in it more, then in all thoſe other Regalo's which ſhe was euer wont to poſſeſſe. For she holds it, to be more ſecure, as being the way of the Croſſe; and it giues alſo, in my opinion, a guſt, which is of mighty worth. For she allowes nothing at all to the Bodie, but paine; and the Soule is that, which originally ſuffers; and doth only feele that ioy, and high contentment, which this verie ſuffering, giues her.

I know not, how all this, can be; but yet it paſſes ſo, in verie truth, that (foraſmuch as I can vnderſtand of my ſelf) I would not change this Fauour, which our Lord doth me, (and which proceeds, as I haue ſayd, from his hand, and is no way acquired by me, as being wholy Supernaturall, in it ſelf) for all thoſe others, which I I ſhall heer declare, afterward; I ſay not, for all them togeather, but for any one of them, being taken ſeuerally, by it ſelfe.

And

And heer, let it not be forgotten, how I say, that these impetuosities, or impulses, which are described heer, ariued after the Fauours, which our Lord did me first; as also after all that, whereof I will write in this Booke; yea, & euen after my entrance into the Fauour, which I am enioying at this present. And I, finding my self, in the beginnings, to be in some feare (as, in effect, it happens to me alwaies, whensoeuer it pleases our Lord to doe me anie Fauour; till at least, in the proceeding therof, I may haue receaued some kind of securitie from his Diuine Maiestie) he willed me, not to feare, but to esteem this Fauour, for greater, then all those others were, which he had formerly been pleased to vouchsafe me; because the Soule was purifyed by this paine; and for that it was burnished, & refined heer, as gold might be in the Chrysuble; that so it might be the more capable, to receaue those enamels, and ornaments of his guifts, and graces; and that so, that was to be wiped away, which would otherwise haue made worke for Purgatorie.

I vnderstood very well, euen before, that this was a great Fauour; but yet I remained with much more securitie, after this; and my Ghostlie Father also tells me, that it is good. And though I were formerly afrayd, yet, because I am so wicked, I could neuer bring my self to beleiue, that it was ill; but rather the verie greatnes it self, of the benefit, gaue me a kind of feare, when I remembred, how very farre I had been from de-

seruing it. But, Blessed be our Lord, who is so good, Amen.

It seemes, that I haue gone from the purpose; for I was beginning to speake of Rapts; and this, which now I haue sayd, is a greater thing, then a Rapt; and so it leaues those effects, in the Soule, which I haue related. And therefore, let vs now returne to speake of Rapts; and of that, which is most vsuall therin. I say then, that it seemed to me, manie times, that it * left my whole Bodie so light, that all the weight thereof, was vtterly gone; yea and sometimes, to such a kind of proportion, as, in effect, I knew not, how to set, so much as my feet, vpon the ground; though yet, when the Soule is in Rapt, the Bodie remaines apart, as if it were vtterly dead, being able, manie times, to doe absolutly nothing at all, of it self; but as it chances to be, at the time, so it remaines, whether it be sitting, or no; or whether it haue the hands, either open, or closed. For, though she loose her senses, some few times, (and the same hath also hapned to me, now and then) yet haue they seldome been totally lost; and that, but for a very short time at once. The most vsuall effect, is wont to be, that she finds her self, a little in disorder; and though she can doe nothing of her self, for asmuch as may concerne the ministerie of the exteriour part, yet leaues she not to vnderstand, yea and also to heare, as if a thing were spoken to her, from farre off. I say not, that she either vnderstands, or heares, when she is in the highest

*The effect of Rapts.

higheſt part of the Rapt (I ſay, in the verie higheſt) at thoſe times, when the Faculties, or Powers, are loſt; becauſe then, they are very ſtraightly vnited to Almightie God; and then, in my opinion, she neither ſees, nor heares. But (as I was ſaying, in the former Prayer of Vnion) this totall transforming of the Soule into God, is wont to continue little; yet, for the time it laſts, no Power of the Soule, either feeles, or doth ſo much as know, what paſſes there. And this, ſeemes to be, after this manner; to the end, that men may vnderſtand, that it is not God's will, that we should know it; and belike, we are not capable therof; at leaſt, it hath paſſed thus, with me.

But now your Reuerence will peraduenture aske me, how then it can come to paſſe, that a Rapt should be able to laſt ſo manie howers. To which I anſwer, that the thing, which hath often occurred to me, is this; That (as I haue declared already, in the former Prayer) we enioy Rapts, by certaine interuals, and interruptions. For, the Soule doth, manie times, ingulfe it ſelf; or rather (to ſpeake both more properly, and more truly) our Lord ingulfs the Soule into him, and entertaines her ſo, a while; and then there remaines that onlie Facultie of hers, which is the Will. Now, me thinkes, that buſines, and buſsle, of the other two Faculties, and Powers, is like thoſe * little Needles of Sunne-Dyals, which vſually doe neuer ſtand ſtill; but yet, when the Sunne of Iuſtice

* *This Saynt is admirable, in her Compaſſions.*

Iuſtice hath a minde to it, he makes them ſtable, and firme; now this, I ſay, laſts but a very little while. But yet, ſince the impulſe, and impetuoſitie was great, and the exaltation of the Spirit, high, the Will remaines ingulfed, and behaues it ſelf like a Soueraigne Ladie, ouer all thoſe operations, which concerne the Bodie; though thoſe other Faculties, and Powers of the Minde, be in agitation, and diſorder. And ſo alſo, ſince thoſe other two ſayd vnquiet, and diſorderlie Powers, haue a minde to diſturbe, and diſtract the Will, (for, of enemies, the fewer, euer the better) the Senſes are not ſuffered to diuert it. And ſo it growes from hence, that they are alſo ſuſpended; becauſe our Bleſſed Lord, is ſo pleaſed; and, for the moſt part, the eyes are ſhut, though yet we had no intention, to ſhut them; and though, by accident, they may be open ſometimes, yet (as I ſayd before) ſhe doth not fix, or ayme, or conſider, at leaſt, at all, what ſhe ſees.

But now, the Bodie, heer, is much leſſe able to doe anie thing with it ſelf, in order to that time, when the ſayd Powers ſhall returne to be vnited; for then, there will not be much, for it, to doe. And therefore, let him, to whome our Lord ſhall vouchſafe this Fauour, not be diſcomforted at all, if then, he chance to find, both the Bodie, to be, as it were, bound vp, manie howers; yea and euen his verie Vnderſtanding, and Memorie, to be diuerted ſometimes.

True it is, that Soules be ordinarily, in this caſe,

caſe, euen drenched, yea and, as it were, drowned, in the praiſes of Almightie God; and in deſiring alſo, to comprehend, and vnderſtand that, which hath paſſed with themſelues; and yet, euen for this purpoſe, they vſe not to be very well awake, but rather like ſome one, who hath ſlept, and dreamt, and is not yet, come very well againe, to himſelf. I declare my thoughts ſo largely heerin; becauſe I know, there are perſons, at this time, yea & euen in this verie place, to whome our Lord doth theſe Fauours; and yet, if they, who direct them, haue wanted the experience of theſe things, perhaps they will conceaue, that they are to be, as it were, dead, in theſe Rapts; eſpecially, if theſe Directours be not learned men. And it is matter, both of pittie, and greif, to conſider, how much is ſuffered, by meanes of ſuch Ghoſtlie Fathers, as doe not vnderſtand this buſines; which I will declare afterward. Perhaps I know not well, what I ſay; but your Reuerence will eaſily vnderſtand, if I hitt anie thing right, ſince our Lord hath already giuen you experience therin; though yet, becauſe it is not long, ſince you began, you will not, peraduenture, haue conſidered it, ſo much as I.

But now, though I endeauoured * much, and manie times; yet the Bodie hath not ſtrength, wherewith to ſtirre it ſelf, but the Soule carries it all, along with her. The perſon, who was ſick, doth thus recouer health, manie times; and ſhe, who was full of weaknes, and paine, recouers ſtrength. For, they be great things, which are beſtowed

* *Other great effects of true Rapts.*

beſtowed in theſe caſes; and ſometimes our Lord is pleaſed (as I was ſaying) that the Bodie ſhould alſo feele his part of ioy, ſince already it yeilds obedience to that, which the Soule deſires. When once ſhe is returned into her ſelf, it will happen to her (if the Rapt haue been great) to goe a day, or two, yea and ſometimes three, with the Powers, ſo abſorpt, and, as it were, ſtupifyed, that they ſeem not to be, altogeather themſelues. But now, heer comes-in the paine, to be able to know againe, how to liue; heer, are our feathers imped; and heer, are the ſick ones falne off; and heer, is the Banner of Chriſt our Lord, ſo directly raiſed-vp, and diſplayed, that now, there ſeemes to remaine no more, but that the Captaine of this Fort, may either get vp himſelf, or els may inſtantly, be carried-vp to the higheſt Tower, there, to plant the ſayd Standard, for the glorie of Almighty God. She lookes now vpon them, who are below, as one, who is already in ſafetie; for now, ſhe is ſo farre from fearing dangers, that ſhe rather wiſhes for them; as a perſon, to whome, in ſome ſort, a ſecuritie, for obtaining victorie, is deſigned. She ſees now, very clearly, the little, that all worldlie things ought to be eſteeemed; or rather, the direct *Nothing*, which all things are. They, who are ſeated very high, are able to diſcouer very much. Already, ſhe renounces the hauing of anie Will; and is reſolued, to haue no other, then that, which is the Will of our Lord; and ſhe giues him alſo the keyes of

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hers. So that now, ſhe, who was the Gardner, is growne to be the Gouernour of the Houſe; nor will ſhe doe anie thing at all, but according to the will of the Lord thereof; nor will ſhe be Ladie, ſo much as of her ſelf; no, nor of any thing; nor euen of anie ſingle Well of that Garden. And, if there be anie thing in her, which is good, ſhe deſires, that his Diuine Maieſtie may diſpoſe thereof; for, ſhe will not, from that time forward, poſſeſſe anie kinde of thing, whereof the proprietie may be her owne; but couets, that all things may be entirely done, in conformitie to the will of our Bleſſed Lord, and for his glorie.

Now really, and with effect, all theſe things are wont to paſſe in this manner, if the Rapts be true; and the Soule is veſted, with thoſe aduantages, and benefits, which are related; and, if theſe doe not follow, I ſhould be apt to doubt, very much, that they were not Rapts, on the part of God; but ſhould rather be inclined to feare, that they were of that kind of Rauings, whereof S. Vincent ſpeakes.

At leaſt, this is what I vnderſtand; and I haue ſeen, by experience it ſelf, that the Soule is wont, in theſe caſes, to become a Ladie, and Queen, ouer all Creatures; and to acquire ſo much Libertie of Spirit, in leſſe then an hower, that ſhe cannot euen know her ſelf; but yet, ſhe well vnderſtands, that all this, is none of her owne; nor doth ſhe know, how ſhe could come to obtaine ſo great a bleſſing; but yet ſtill, ſhe vnder-

vnderſtands withall, the extreame great benefit, and aduantage, which euerie one of theſe Rapts bring vpon her. There is no Creature, who can credit all this, but ſuch an one, as hath learnt it, by experience; and therefore men beleiue not the poore Soule, which they haue ſeen to be wicked, and now find, ſo very ſoone, to pretend to doe certaine things, of ſo high importance; for inſtantly ſhe reſolues, not to be content to ſerue our Lord in ſmall matters, but in the very greateſt ſhe can. Now the world is apt to conceaue, that ſuch endeauours are but impertinencies, and temptations; and yet, if men would but vnderſtand, and conſider, that they are not things, which grow from themſelues, but from our Bleſſed Lord, to whome they had already deliuered-vp the keyes of their Will, they would not ſo much wonder at it. For my part, I am of opinion, that a Soule, which comes once to this ſtate, doth already neither doe, nor euen ſay anie thing, of her ſelf, but that this Soueraigne King hath care of all that, which is to occurr.

O my deare God! and how clearly doth a Soule ſee heer, the ſenſe, and ſignification of that Verſe; and how it is to be vnderſtood, that both he had reaſon, and that all the world ſhould alſo haue it, to deſire the *vvings of a Doue*. For it is eaſily, and clearly to be vnderſtood, of that *Flight*, which the Spirit makes, whereby to raiſe it ſelf, aboue all Creatures; and, in the firſt place, from, and aboue her ſelf. But this is a ſweet *Flight*; a

guſtfull,

guſtfull, and pleaſant *Flight*; and a *Flight* without noiſe. What kinde of dominion doth ſuch a Soule poſſeſſe, which our Lord doth once conduct to this pitch, that ſhe may be able to looke downe, vpon all things, without being once intangled by anie of them? and how full of confuſion will ſhe be, for that time, wherein ſhe was intangled before? And how much will ſhe be amazed, to looke-back vpon that blindnes of hers? How full, will ſhe be of compaſſion, for ſuch, as doe yet remaine therin? eſpecially, if they be perſons of Prayer, and ſuch, as it pleaſes God to regale. She will heer, be glad, to cry out very lowd, that ſo ſhe may make men vnderſtand, how mightily they are abuſed, and deceiued; yea and ſo, ſhe alſo doth, ſometimes. And then, men are apt to rayne downe, euen whole ſhowers of perſecutions, vpon her head; and they treat her, as one, who wants Humilitie, and who employes her ſelf, to teach thoſe perſons, of whome ſhe might doe well, to learne; and eſpecially, if ſhe be a woeman; for then, come they in, to condemne her; yea and perhaps they may haue reaſon; becauſe they know not, by what impulſe she is moued. But yet, as she knowes not, how to helpe her ſelf, on the one ſide; ſo alſo can she not forbeare, on the other, to vnbeguile thoſe perſons, whome she loues, & whome she deſires to ſee vnfettered, from the Priſon of this life; for, that ſtate, wherein she was, neither ſeemes leſſe, nor is leſſe, then a Priſon. She is alſo much afflicted,

flicted, and tired out, with the thought of that time, wherein she tooke anie care of points of Honour; and for the grosse, false errour, wherein she was, to haue beleiued that, to be Honour, which the world calls Honour; for she sees, that it was an abominable lye; and yet, that euerie bodie liues in practise of that false Doctrine. But now, this Soule vnderstands, and knowes, That, right Honour, is not false, but true; esteeming that, to be worth somewhat, which indeed is so; and holding that, which indeed is nothing, in no account at all; since all is nothing, and lesse then nothing, which once comes to haue an end; and, in the meane time, doth not please Almightie God.

She despises also, and laughes at her self, for the time, wherein she made anie acccount of Monie, and of the couetous desires thereof; though yet, in this particular, I doe not beleiue (and certainly, it is very true) that I euer had anie fault, to confesse; but it will haue been fault enough, to haue held them, in anie manner of account. If, with them, I had been able to buy these blessings, which now I find in my self, I might haue esteemed them very much. But now, the Soule perceaues, that this blessing is gotten best, by leauing all things. But what, in fine, is that, which can be bought with this Monie, which we so much desire? Is it anie thing of true worth? Is it anie thing, which is durable? Or to what end, doe we desire it? A miserable kind of supply, and repose, doe we procure, by that, which costs

vs so

vs so deare; for we often goe with it to Hell; and we buy no other thing, by meanes therof, then endlesse torment, in euerlasting fire. O that all men would, at length, resolue, to hold it but for earth, which is good for nothing? How orderly would the world then proceed? How free would all places be, from vniust contracts? & how sincerely would all men performe acts of freindship, if once there raigned no interest, either of Honour, or monie, in the mindes of men? For my part, I conceiue, that the world, would be reduced, to good order.

This Soule sees also then, that there is a great blindnes in the conceipt, which men frame about the delights of this world; and how we buy nothing, by their meanes, euen for this very life, which we leade heer, but affliction, and disquiet. How great disquiet, and how little contentment? and, in fine, what a deale of labouring in vaine? And heer, is the Soule able to discerne, not only grosse Cobwebs, and great faults, but euen anie poore graine of dust, how little soeuer, it may be; and so, how much soeuer she may haue laboured, to perfect her self, if once the Sunne shine bright, and if the same Sunne strike it through, with those beames, in good earnest, she will find it to be dustie enough. It is like a Glasse, full of water, which you will hold to be very cleare, and pure, vnlesse the Sunne shine vpon it; but if you see it once falne vpon, by those beames, you will find it to be all full of moates.

This Comparison is very literally true; for, before the Soule is in this Extasis, she conceiues her self, to haue been very carefull, not to offend Almightie God; & that she performed it according to the vttermost of her power; but yet being come once so farre, as that this Sunne of Iustice shines vpon her, which makes her open her eyes, she then sees so many moates therin, that she would be glad, if she could tell how, to shut them againe; for she is not yet, become so true an Eaglet, of this swift, and strong Eagle, which bred her, as that she can be able to looke earnestly vpon this Sunne. But, how little soeuer she chance to hold them open, she sees her self all impure; and calls that Verse to minde, which saith: *VVho shall euer be iust, in thy presence?* When once she beholds this Diuine Sunne, her sight is dazled, by the brightnes of it; but when she lookes in, vpon her self, her eyes are stopped vp, with clay; and so this poore Doue, is blind; yea, and it happens manie times, that she also remaines blind, for good, and all; as being absorpt, amazed, and, as it were, out of her witts, with so manie mightie greatnesses, as she is then, growne to see. Heer, finally, is true Humilitie acquired; not careing, anie way at all, either to speake well of her self, or yet, that others should doe it. And our Lord deuides, and dispo-ses of the Fruit of this Garden; not she; and so, there sticks nothing of it, to her fingars. All the good, which she hath, goes on, as still addressed to Almightie God; and if she be drawne to say anie

anie thing of her self, it is also directed to his glorie; for she knowes, that she hath no interest therin; and cannot be ignorant therof, euen though she would; as discerning it, by the verie sight of her eyes, which are shut towards the things of this world, but which are still kept open, for the vnderstanding of Truths, almost whether she will, or no.

THE ONE AND TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

She prosecutes, and finishes, this last Degree of Prayer. She declares, vvhat the Soule finds therein, vvhen she returnes to liue againe, in the vvorld; and the Light also, vvhich our Lord giues, concerning the deceipts, and errours of the same vvorld. This Chapter deliuers excellent Doctrine.

I Will therefore now finish that, which I was saying; That, namely, there is heer no more now anie need, that the Soule should giue anie new consent, since already she hath giuen it all; and knowes, that she hath voluntarily, deliuered her self wholy vp, into his hands; and that she cannot deceiue him, who is the knower of all things; for it is not, as things passe heer, in this world, where all this life of ours, is full of nothing, but duplicities, and deceipts; and, when you thinke you haue fully gotten the good will of anie

Creature, by the shew he makes, you quickly come to vnderstand, that all, is tricks, and lyes; and that no bodie can tell, how to liue in a world of so much odd busines; especially, if there be anie little interest of the Parties. But blessed is that Soule, which our Lord comes once to draw to the knowledge of such things, as are reall Truths. O what a condition, and fortune were this, for Kings! and how much would it import them, more, to gaine this great aduantage, then to get large Dominions, and States? What rectitude would there be foūd, in the Kingdome? How manie mischeifs, would haue been forborne already, & would also be forborne heerafter? For heer, there is no feare of loosing life, or honour, for the loue of Almightie God; but rather such losses as these, would goe for a great blessing, amōgst such, as find thēselues carrie another māner of respect, to the honour of our Lord, then to all them, to whome they are lesse obliged. For, Kings are the men, whome those others follow; and, in this case, these Kings, would loose a thousand Kingdomes; and they would haue great reason, to be glad to doe so, rather thē to loose the meanes, of making one stepp further, towards the augmentation of the Holie Catholick Faith, or the procuring some light, for Hereticks; for, it is another manner of busines, to purchase, and get such a kind of Kingdome, as will neuer end. And what Soule soeuer, shall come to tast but one single dropp of this water, all the rest of this whole world, will

be

be but fitt, euen to turne the ſtomack.

But now, if the Soule of ſuch a perſon, should fall out, to be once ingulfed into this water; what ſtrange effects, would it produce? Deare Lord, if thou shouldſt draw me, to ſuch a condition, as that I might be able to publish this truth, with a lowd voice, they would yet beleiue mee, no more, then they doe others, who know, how to publiſh the ſame, after a much better manner. But yet, at leaſt, I ſhould giue ſatisfaction to my ſelf; and, me thinkes, I ſhould eſteem, euen my verie life, but at a little rate, vpon condition, that I might be able to giue but ſome one, of theſe ſingle Truths, to be well vnderſtood. And yet I know not, what I ſhould be able to doe with my ſelf, afterward; for there is no truſt at all, to be had in me, I being that miſerable creature, which I am. Yet ſtill I haue ſo great impulſes, to vtter, and declare theſe things, to ſuch as be in authoritie, and command, that, me thinkes, they doe euen annihilate, and conſume me.

And yet now, ſince I can doe no more, I returne, O my Lord, towards thee, to ſeeke remedie, for all inconueniences; for thou, O my Lord, knoweſt well, how highly glad, I would be, to diſpoſſeſſe my ſelf, euen of all theſe verie Fauours, which, of thy goodnes, thou haſt vouchſafed to doe me (prouided alwayes, that I might ſtill remaine, in condition, neuer to offend thee more) and to reſigne them vp, to * Kings, and Princes; for then, it is very certaine, that it would

* *Her great zeale for the conuerſion of*

 Kings.

be wholy impossible for them, either to permit, that those things should be done, which are permitted; or yet, that they should faile, to receiue extraordinarie blessings, at thy hand. O make them, my God, vnderstand, to how much they are obliged, since thou wert pleased (by what I haue heard) to honour them, in such sort, vpon earth, as that, when thou takest anie of them away, there is some kind of * signification therof, euen in the Heauens. And, when I thinke of this, it breeds a kind of deuotion in me, that thou, O my King, maist be pleased to make them, euen heerby, vnderstand, that they ought to imitate thee, in their life; since there grow, in some sort, to be certaine apparances, and signes, in Heauen, at their death; as there was, when euen thy self camest to dye. I see well, that I am presuming very farre; but I beseech your Reuerence, teare it, if you mislike it, and beleiue, that I would be glad, to speake it better, if I were present with them; and if I could tell, how; and especially, if I thought, that they would beleiue me; for I recommend them, very much, to Almightie God; and I wish, that it might doe them good. When a bodie resolues to venture his life, he may, in effect, doe what he lists; and I desire very often, to loose mine; for, that were to venture little, for the gaining of much. But now, one may thinke, that there is scarce anie Creature in the world, who indeed liues; cōsidering how grosly visible, that great deceipt, and errour, is, which we carrie about

* *She alludes to Comets, and blazing Starrs.*

about vs; and with what blindnes, we conuerse, in this world.

But, when once the Soule comes to the passe, of this Water; they are not bare desires, which she carries, for the seruice of Almightie God; for then, his Diuine Maiestie giues her strength also, to put them in execution. Nor can there anie such thing be once represented to her, wherein she may thinke to serue him, vpon which she will not cast her self, all at once; and yet she will thinke, all the while, that she is doing nothing; for now she sees very clearly, that all things are meerly nothing, which concerne not the giuing gust to Almightie God. The onlie trouble, in this case, is, that there is nothing indeed, deseruing truly the name of trouble, which will offer it self, to anie such person, as is so very vnprofitable, as I am. But be thou, O my eternall Good, so well pleased, as that once, some such little moment of time may occurr, as wherein, I may be able to pay the least imaginable crumme, of all that great seruice, which I owe thee. Ordaine thou things, O my Lord, in what sort thou wilt; so that yet, this poore creature of thine, may once be able to pay thee some little seruice. There haue been other manner of woemen, in the world, who haue done heroicall things, for loue of thee; but I am good for nothing, but to prate; and so it is not thy pleasure, O my Lord, to employ me, about putting anie thing in execution; but that all the seruice, which I am to doe thee, must passe

away in words, and desires; yea and euen I haue not libertie in this little; and peraduenture I should be faultie, in all. But strengthen thou my Soule, and dispose of it first, O thou, the Good of all Goods, my deare Iesus; and then ordaine things in such sort, as that I may once, be able to doe somewhat for thee; and that there may be no such Creature in the world, as should endure to receiue so much; and yet withall, to pay nothing. Let it cost, O my Lord, what it can; but let not these hands of mine, appeare alwaies so very emptie in thy presence, since Rewards are to be set-out, and giuen, according to the Workes. Behold, heer is my Life, heer is my Honour, and heer is my Will; and thou knowest, that I haue giuen it all, to thee; and am entirely thine; and therefore, dispose of me, according to thine owne good pleasure. I see, O my Lord, very well, how little I am able to execute; but yet being now come to thee, and hauing mounted-vp to this Tower, from which, Truths are truly discouered, if thou depart not from me, there is nothing, which I shall not be able to performe; and yet, if thou depart, how little soeuer that may be, I am to goe, where I was; which is, into a kind of being in Hell.

O what it is, for a Soule, which findes her self, in such condition, as this, to be put to returne againe, to conuerse in the world; and to behold, and see, the Antick, and fantasticall Puppet-Playes of this life, which are so ridiculously ordered; and to spend time, in complying with this Bodie of ours,

ours, both by sleeping, and eating; for, all this, wearies the Soule, which knowes not, how to scape from thence, but finds it self to be surprized, and enchained. It then sees, much more euidently, the true captiuitie, wherein we remaine, by the verie condition of these Bodies of ours, and by the miserie of these liues, which we leade; and then, we come to know, very well, the much reason, which S. Paul had, to beseech Almightie God, to deliuer him from it; wherein, he cryes-out alowd, and beggs libertie, of his Diuine Maiestie; as I haue formerly sayd. But now, this is often done, with so very great impulse of minde, that the Soule would euen faine get out of the Bodie, in pursuite of this libertie; and, in the meane time, since she cannot be freed, she * walkes vp, and downe the world, like one, who were sold for some Slaue, to serue, and play the Drudge, in a strange Country. And that, which afflicts her yet more, is, that she knowes not, how to meet with manie, who will be so well disposed, as to lament with her, and to desire that, which she desires; for they ordinarily, desire but to liue. O that once we might be vntyed from all things! and that we might not place our contentment, in anie thing of this world! How would then, that paine, which we should find to be liuing alwaies without God, appease, and temper the feare of death, through the desire, which, by this meanes, we should haue, of attaining to the fruition of eternall life.

* *A rare expression.*

Sometimes, when I am considering, how such a Creature, as I, to whome our Lord hath giuen this light, with such an imperfect kind of charitie, as I possesse, and with so poore repose, as I enioy, (since my life hath deserued no better) can yet so often find my self in distresse, for being in this banishment of mine. I may easily grow to imagine, what kind of sense, and feeling, that would be, which Saints haue had in this case; and what kind of commotion, a S. Paul, and a S. Marie Magdalen, and such others, like them, would find in themselues, in whome the fire of the Loue of Almightie God, did raigne. It must certainly haue been, a continuall Martyrdome to them. To me it seemes, that all the ease, or rather indeed, absence of paine, which I might be able to find in this world, were, but to treat with some such persons, as in whome I might be able to meet with such desires, as these; I say, desires, with deeds; and I say yet againe, with deeds. For, there are certaine people in the world, who, if you will beleiue themselues, are absolutly vntyed from the world, & so they publish, that they are; and so indeed, it is very fitt, they were; because euen their verie profession, and condition, requires as much; and so also doe those manie yeares, since they beganne to enter into the way of Perfection. But yet, this Soule of mine, knowes well, how to find a difference, euen from farre off, between such, as desire these things, but in words; and such others, as confirme their words,

by

by their workes. For she knowes, how to vnderstand, very well, the little good, which these doe in the world, and the much, which is done by those others; and indeed, this is such a kind of thing, as whosoeuer is of experience, may very easily discerne.

And now I haue sett downe the Effects, which those Rapts, that proceed from the Spirit of Almightie God, are wont to produce. It is true, that some of them, doe it more; and some, lesse; I say lesse; because, though in the beginnings they worke, yet then, the Effects are not seen experimentally, by way of outward expression; nor can it be yet, so well perceiued, that they haue them; and besides, the perfection therof, goes increasing; and the Soule goes procuring, that there may now, be no memorie of imperfections; which will appeare if there be any, like so many Cobwebs; and this now requires some time. And by how much the more, Humilitie, and the Loue of our Lord, encreases in the Soule: so much the more sweet, and fresh odour, will these Flowers of vertue, be sure to giue, both to themselues, and others. And it is most certainly true, that our Lord knowes, how to worke so well, vpon anie Soule, in one of these Rapts, that there will not much remaine, for the Soule her self, to worke, and labour in, towards the acquiring of perfection. For, no Creature is able to beleiue, without direct experience vpon himself, how much it pleases our Lord, to bestow vpon a Soule, in such an

an occaſion, as this; nor is there anie kind of diligence of ours, which can, in my opinion, attaine it. I ſay not, but that, by the Fauour of our Lord, ſuch as employ themſelues manie yeares, by thoſe wayes, which they preſcribe, who write of Prayer, both concerning the beginning, and proceeding therof, may ariue to perfection, and to a totall vntying, and looſening themſelues, from the things of this world, with much labour, and paines, but neuer in ſo short a time; whereas heer, our Lord is pleaſed to worke it, & that preſently, without anie labour of ours. And he expreſly, & clearly, drawes the Soule from the earth, and whatſoeuer is earthlie; and he giues her an abſolute dominion ouer all things, which are therin; though yet there be not, in this Soule, anie more true value, or merit, then there was, euen in mine. Nor doe I know, how to exaggerate this point more; for in mine, there was, in effect, none at all. If now it chance to be asked, why his Diuine Maieſtie doth it, there is no other anſwer, but becauſe he is pleaſed to doe it; and he doth it alſo iuſt ſo, as he is pleaſed; and though ſometimes there be no diſpoſition in her at all, to receiue it, he yet diſpoſes alſo the ſame, to receiue that benefit, and bleſſing, which his Diuine Maieſtie is pleaſed to impart. So that he giues it not alwayes, becauſe the Gardner hath deſerued it, by dreſſing vp, and cultiuating his Garden well, (though yet it be very certaine, that whoſoeuer doth this, as he ought, and doth procure, withall,

withall,to vntye his whole affection from things of this world, will neuer faile to be regaled by him) but ſometimes, becauſe it is his pleaſure (as I haue ſayd) to ſhew his power, and greatnes, euen vpon the moſt barren Soile; and to prepare it, for the receauing all kind of good. So that now, ſhe ſeemes not, in ſome ſort, to haue ſo much as a Power, to returne to liue in offence of Almightie God, as ſhe was wont; but ſhe hath her thoughts ſo habituated to vnderſtand what is Truth indeed, that all the reſt, ſeemes but a foolerie, and fitt to make ſport, for children. She ſmiles alſo in her ſelf ſometimes, when ſhe findes certaine graue perſons, who liue in the exerciſe of Prayer,and Religion,make account of certaine fooliſh points of Honour, which ſuch a Soule, as this, holds now to be directly, vnder her feet. Some will ſay, that this is but diſcretion, and a preſeruing, forſooth, of their dignitie, and ranke; that ſo, afterward, they may be able, to doe the more good. But, that other Soule, vnderſtands very well, that they might haue done Almightie God more ſeruice, in one day,if they would haue made their authoritie, and honour yeild, and ſhrinke, for the loue of Almightie God, then they would euer doe, in ten yeares, by vpholding, and authorizing the ſame, after their way. But thus doth this kind of Soule lead a certaine troubleſome life, and is euer ſubiect to the Croſſe; though yet euer going on, with encreaſe. And though the perſons, who vſe to treat with her,

her, conceiue her sometimes, to be euen already, at the verie verie topp of Perfection, yet doe they find, shortly after, that still she growes to be more improued; for, our Lord goes euer fauouring her, more and more. God himself, is, in effect, her Soule; and it is he, who hath already taken the charge of her, into his hands; and he shines euen brightly, in her; and seemes to be assisting her, after a kind of euident manner; both that she may not offend him, and by continually also fauouring, and stirring her still vp, to serue him.

When once my Soule ariued so farre, as that Almightie God might be pleased to doe her this great Fauour, my miseries, and Sinnes, did cease, euen all at once, and our Lord gaue me strength, to quitt them; and it moued me no more, to be afterward in those occasions of imperfection; and with persons, who had formerly been wont to to bring distractions vpon me, then if I had not been there, at all; nay rather that, which was wont to damnifye me, grew to assist me now; and all things were now, fitt meanes, to make me know God more, and to loue him better; and to see, how deeply I was obliged to him; and to make me, in fine, very sorrie, for what I had been.

But yet I well vnderstood withall, that this came no way from me; nor had I growne to gaine it, by anie diligence of mine owne; nor indeed, had I euen had time for it; but only his Diuine Maiestie, through the meer, and onlie motiue of his owne

owne goodnes, had giuen me ſtrength, for this purpoſe. From the time, when our Lord was pleaſed to afford me the Fauour of theſe Rapts, this ſtrength hath gone on, with encreaſe; and he hath alſo held me ſo faſt, with his hand, that I might not returne back againe, anie more. And now, me thinkes, that it is nothing at all, which I doe on my part; but I vnderſtand, in a very euident manner, that our Lord is he, who workes; and therefore I am apt to be of opinion, that the perſon, to whome our Lord doth ſhew theſe Fauours (ſuppoſing euer, that, with all humilitie, and feare, he will vnderſtand, and acknowledge, that it is our Lord himſelf, who doth them, and that, in effect, we doe nothing at all in the buſines) may put himſelf into anie companie; and that, how diſtracted, and vitious ſoeuer it be, it will not moue, or euen concerne him, but that rather, it will be of helpe to him, and miniſter him ſome occaſion, or other, whereby he may reape more aduantage, for his owne good.

For, theſe are already made ſtrong Soules, which our Lord is pleaſed to chooſe, for the helping of others; though yet ſtill, it muſt be conſidered, that this ſtrength proceeds not from themſelues. But when once our Bleſſed Lord brings a Soule ſo neer himſelf, as I haue ſhewed, he goes, by little and little, communicating very great ſecrets to her. And heer, come the true Reuelations, in this kind of Extaſis; and other great Fauours, and Viſions. And all theſe things ſerue

to make this Soule, both more humble, and more ſtrong; and to giue her grace, to hold all kind of worldlie things, in no account; as alſo to know more clearly, the greatnes of that reward, which our Bleſſed Lord hath prouided for ſuch, as ſerue him. I humbly beſeech his Diuine Maieſtie, that the exceſſiue bountie, which he hath vouchſafed to shew, towards this miſerable, ſinnefull Creature, may proue ſome part of a motiue, to make them, who shall read this Diſcourſe, encourage, and animate themſelues, to leaue all things, yea euen abſolutly all, for Almightie God, ſince his Diuine Maieſtie is pleaſed to giue ſo compleat rewards. For we ſee, and that clearly enough, what aduantages, and Fauours, and retributions, he is pleaſed to allow, euen in this life, to ſuch as ſerue him; and what then will he be ſure to doe for them, in the next?

THE

THE TWO AND TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

In vvhich she treats, of hovv secure a vvay it is, for persons, vvho giue themselues to Contemplation, not to raise-vp their Spirit, to high things, vnlesse our Lord raise them vp; and that the Humanitie of Christ our Lord, is indeed, to be the meanes, towards the highest Contemplation of all others. She speakes also of an errour, vvherein once she vvas. This Chapter containes matter of much profit.

I Will heer declare a certaine thing, which is, in my opinion, very important; and, if your Reuerence thinke fitt, it may serue you, for a word of aduise; yea and perhaps, you may grow euen to haue need therof. I haue read in some Bookes, written of Prayer, which affirme, that, howsoeuer the Soule is not able, of it self, to ariue to that State, whereof I spake before, (because all that, is Supernaturall, which our Lord workes there) yet she may be able, forsooth, to help her self therin, by raising-vp her Spirit aboue all things created; and that so, she hauing raised it vp, manie yeares togeather, with humilitie, and hauing first passed through the *Purgatiue* way, and after that, through the *Illuminatiue*, they aduise, in

particular manner, that men ſhould ſeparate, and abſtract themſelues, from all kind of imagination or reflection, vpon corporeall things; and that ſo, they ſhould be able to approach, and reach, the contemplation of the Diuinitie. For they ſay, that, although it be euen the verie Humanitie it ſelf, of Chriſt our Lord, yet is it of ſome impediment, to ſuch, as proceed thus farre; yea and that it hinders men, from the moſt perfect kind of Contemplation.

*An opinion, which is more probable, then true.

For the making this Opinion * good, they alleadge that, which our Lord ſayd to his Apoſtles, when himſelf was aſcending-vp to Heauen, of the coming of the Holie-Ghoſt downe vpon them, which would not be accomplished, till himſelf were retired out of their ſight. But, for my part, I am apt to conceaue, that if they had then, had that Liuelie Faith, of our Lord's being both God, and Man, (which they had, after the coming of the Holie Ghoſt) his Corporall Preſence would haue done them no hurt at all. For he held no ſuch diſcourſe to his Bleſſed Mother, though ſhe loued him much more, then they all. But theſe men vſe to alleadge this paſſage, or place of Scripture; becauſe it ſeemes to them (in regard, that all this action of Prayer, is a worke of Spirit) that euerie Corporeall Obiect, will be able to diuert, and hinder it; and that, forſooth, they muſt conſider themſelues, after a manner, which is totally independent vpon Creatures; and that God is alike neer them, on all ſides; and

ſo,

so, to see themselues ingulfed in him, is the thing, which they should endeauour to obtaine.

Now, this doth not displease me, to be vsed, at some times; and in some cases; but yet, to deuide our selues wholy; from the person of Christ our Lord, and to bring that Diuine Bodie of his, into the account; and companie of these miseries of ours, or euen with all the rest of the whole created world, I can by no meanes endure; and I humbly begg of his Diuine Maiestie, that I may be able to giue my self to be vnderstood.

I will not yet, put my self to contradict them, because they are learned men, and spirituall persons; who faile not to know well, what they say; and it is also very true, that it pleases Almightie God, to carrie, and conduct Soules, by seuerall walkes, and wayes, as he did mine. And now, I will declare some particulars thereof; for, in the rest, I will not interpose my self, but only speake of the danger, wherein I found I was, because I conformed my self, to what I had read. I well beleiue, that whosoeuer shall find himself to haue ariued to the State of Vnion, and not to haue passed further on, so farre as to haue Rapts, and Visions, togeather with such other Fauours, as our Lord is wont to impart to Soules, may hold that, which is spoken of, to be better; as I also did. But yet, if I had continued therin, I beleiue, I should neuer haue ariued to that pitch, wherein now I am. For, in my opinion, it is an errour,* and deceipt; though yet per-

*This seems to haue been a foolish, and ill-fauoured kind of errour in those others.

perhaps; it may be my self, who am the person deceiued; & yet I will relate, what hapned to me. Whilst I was in want of a Director, and the while, went reading the Bookes aforesayd, whereby I thought I grew to vnderstand somewhat; by little, and little, I came, indeed, to find afterward, that, if our Lord had not been my teacher, I should haue learnt very little, by those Bookes; For, really, it was nothing, which I vnderstood; till his Diuine Maiestie was pleased to make me know it, by experience; nor indeed, did I know, what I did. But, when afterward I came so farre, as to haue some kind of Prayer, which was Supernaturall (I meane, the Prayer of Quiet) I procured to dismisse my self of all kind of Corporeall Obiects; though yet, I durst not goe raising, and exalting my Soule. For, considering that I was alwaies so very wicked, I saw, that this was to be a great presumption, in me. But then I came to thinke, that I felt a kind of Presence of Almightie God, in me, after a particular manner, as indeed I did; and I procured, to recollect my self, with him. And this is a very sauourie, and gustfull kind of Prayer, if our Lord assist a Soule particularly therein; and the delight of it, is great; and when both the profit, and pleasure, which it giues, is once obserued by the Soule, there could be then, no meanes, to make me returne againe, to the Humanitie of Christ our Lord; because, in realitie of truth, I conceiued, that it was an impediment to me.

O thou

O thou Lord of my Soule, and my Good! thou, Christ our Lord, who wert Crucifyed; I neuer call to minde the opinion, which I entertained in this case, but I am afflicted by it. For I conceaue my self, to haue committed a huge Treason therin, against thee; (though yet my ignorance may peraduenture haue been some excuse) I hauing been so particularly deuoted, to the person of Christ our Lord, throughout the whole course of my life; for, this other proceeding of mine, occurred in the verie latter part therof; I say, in the verie latter part, immediatly before our Blessed Lord vouchsafed me those Fauours, of Rapts, and Visions.

I continued a very little while, in this opinion; and so I euer came quickly back, to delight my self, with this deare Lord of mine; and especially, when I receiued the Blessed Sacrament, I euer desired to haue some Picture of him, in mine eye, since I was not able to carrie him so deeply engrauen, or stamped vpon my Soule, as I could haue wished. But is it possible, O my deare Lord, that euer anie such thought, as this, should be able to get in, to my hart, euen for one single hower, as that thou wert to haue been able to hinder my obtaining my greatest Good? Alas, from whence came all the Benedictions, and benefits, which euer I receiued, but only from thee? But I will not so much as thinke, that really I was faultie heerin; but rather I am to pittie my self for that, which certainly proceeded from ig-

norance in me. And so, thou didst vouchsafe, through thy goodnes, to redresse, and assist me, by helping me to one afterward, who might deliuer me out of this errour; and besides, also, by making me able to see thee so often, * as I shall declare heerafter; that so I might the more clearly vnderstand, how great that ignorance of mine, was; and finally, to the end, that I might publish the same, to manie, as I haue done already; and that now, I might also record it heer.

** That was, by seuerall Visions.*

For my part, I conceiue, that the reason, why manie Soules get not forward, in the way of Profit, and why they reach not to obtaine some very great libertie of Spirit, when they ariue to vse Prayer of Vnion, is this verie thing. And I conceiue, that there are two reasons, vpon which, I may well ground this opinion; and though perhaps, that be of no moment, which I am going to vtter, yet I will not forbeare to doe it; because I haue found by experience, that it went very ill with my Soule, till it pleased our Blessed Lord, to giue me light. For, all those Ioyes, which she tooke, came to me, but by supps, and gulps; and when once I was past the present occasion, I found not my self, to haue such companie, and strength, for the enduring of tribulations, and temptations, as yet I mett with, afterward. But one of these reasons, why men get not forward, is, that there may peraduenture goe a dramme of some certaine little want of Humilitie, which lyes hidden, and plaistered ouer, in such sort, that

euen

euen the person, who is so faultie, may, perhaps, not so very easily, find it. And who now, will euer be so proud, and wretched, as I; yea and that, when he should haue laboured, throughout the whole course of his life, and made as manie Prayers, and suffered as manie Pennances, and endured as manie Persecutions, as might be imagined, would not yet find himself rich enough, and abundantly rewarded, and payd for them all, when our Lord should giue him leaue, to remaine at the foot of the Crosse, with S.Iohn? Nay I know not, into what braine it would sinke, but mine, not to be content, with such a felicitie, as this; who was euer a looser so manie wayes, in all those things, whereby I ought to haue been a gainer.

But now, though our miserable fraile condition, or els, perhaps, our sicknes, should not permit vs, to be alwayes reflecting vpon the Passion of our Blessed Lord; yet at least, what should hinder vs from remaining with him, now, that he is risen againe, to Glorie; since we haue him so neare vs, in the Blessed Sacrament of the Aultar, where we see him glorifyed now? Nor need we behold him there, so distressed; and so afflicted; so torne in peices; so ouerflowing with bloud; so wearied in those rugged High-Wayes; so persecuted by those, whome he benefited so highly; and the while, not so much, as to be beleiued in, by his verie Apostles. For, it is most certainly true, that one hath not alwaies the hart, to be euen

able; to reflect vpon so excessiue afflictions, as he felt. But now heer, we haue him without paine, and full of glorie, giuing strength of bodie to some, and courage of minde to others, before he ascended vp to Heauen.

He makes himself euen our Companion, in the Blessed Sacrament; yea and seemes, as if it had not been in his power, to depart anie one moment from vs; and that now it should yet haue been in mine, to part from thee, O my Lord! yea and this, that I might serue thee, so much the better. * Let it passe, my deare Lord, if it please thee, that when I sinned against thee, I did not know thee; but that now, when I come to know thee, I should fancie a meanes to my self, of growing a greater gainer by this way! O what an ill way was that? and now I find, that indeed I had vtterly lost my way; if thou, O Lord, hadst not restored me to it; for, in seing, that thou art neer me, I haue seen, that I haue all good things, with thee. Nor doe I euer meet with anie affliction, or trouble, but as soone as I consider, in what kind of miserable posture thou wert carried, and placed, before those Iudges, it growes instantly, to be very easily borne. With the presence of so deare a Freind, and vnder the conduct of so good a Captaine, as was pleased to put himself in the foremost ranke, that so he might suffer most, and first, there is nothing, which may not well, be endured. He assists, and giues strength, and courage; yea and neuer failes. He is a very fast, and true

A sweet, and iust cõplaint, and worthie of the Saint who made it.

true Freind; and I see clearly, and I haue seen it yet againe, that, to the end we may be able to content Almightie God, and that he may powre great Fauours downe vpon vs, he is pleased, that all should passe, by the hands of this most Sacred Humanitie; in which, his Diuine Maiestie hath declared, that he was much delighted. I haue seen this truth, by experience, very, very manie times; besides, that our Lord himself, hath told me so. I haue also clearly seen, that we are to enter in, by this gate, if we desire, that his Soueraigne Maiestie should communicate great secrets to our Soules. ** By Vision.

So that, Sir, I wish your Reuerence, not to put your self vpon anie other way, then this; though you should be euen vpon the verie highest topp of Contemplation; for heer, you shall find your self safe; since this Lord of ours, is he, by whose meanes, we are to receiue all Benedictions; and he will addresse your life, by your Meditation, vpon his; for he is the best Originall, and Patterne, which we can possibly haue. And indeed, what can we desire more, then to haue so perfect a Freind, at hand, who will neuer giue vs ouer, in our afflictions, and tribulations; as they, of this world, are wont to doe? Most Blessed is that man, who loues him, with all sinceritie of truth; and who is alwaies carrying him, close, to himself.

Let vs looke vpon the Glorious S.Paul, who seemes, as if he could not suffer, that euer the

name of Ieſus, ſhould be able, to fall often enough, from his mouth; as one, who did not faile, to carrie it well imprinted, vpon his hart. And ſince I vnderſtood of that other abſtracted courſe, whereof I ſpoke, I haue reflected vpon diuerſe great Contemplatiue Saints, with much care; and I find, that they went no other way, then this. S. Francis ſhewes it plainly, by the Wounds; S. Anthonie of Padua, by the Infant; S. Bernard delighted himſelf much, in the Humanitie of our Bleſſed Lord; and ſo alſo did S. Katherine of Sienna; togeather with manie other Saints, as your Reuerence knowes, better, then I.

This departing, and abſtracting ones ſelf, from all Corporeall Obiects, ſhould, as it ſeemes, be good, ſince perſons, who are ſo Spirituall, affirme it; but yet, in my opinion, this muſt be vnderſtood of Soules, who are very *Proficient* in Spirit; for, till then, it is euident enough, that the Creatour is to be ſought, by meanes of the Creatures. But yet, I will vndertake nothing in this caſe, ſince all depends vpon the Fauour, which our Lord is pleaſed to ſhew, to anie Soule. That, which I would faine giue to be vnderſtood, is, that the moſt Sacred Humanitie of Chriſt our Lord, muſt not be made to come into that account; and let this point be well vnderſtood, wherein I would faine know, how to declare my ſelf. When God is pleaſed to ſuſpend all the Powers of the Soule, in thoſe kindes of Prayer, which are related, we haue ſeen plainly, that this

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Preſence of Chriſt our Lord, is taken from vs, whether we will, or no; and let it then, be gone, in a good hower; for, that kind of loſſe, is a happie one, whereby we come to enioy more of that, which we conceiue our ſelues to haue loſt; for then, the Soule employes her ſelf wholy, vpon louing him, whome the Vnderſtanding hath already endeauoured to know; and ſhe loues that, which ſhe did not fully comprehend; and now ioyes in that, wherein ſhe could not alſo haue ioyed, but only by looſing her ſelf, for her greater gaine. But now, that we ſhould, by tricks, and of ſett-purpoſe, accuſtome our ſelues, not to procure, with our whole power, to carrie alwaies in our eyes (and I would to God, it were alwaies) this moſt Sacred Humanitie of Chriſt our Lord; this, I ſay, is that, which I like not; ſince it is a way, of making the Soule walke in the Ayre, as we vſe to ſay. For it ſeemes, that ſhe hath no firme, and ſtable reſting-place, howſoeuer ſhe may make her ſelf beleiue, that ſhe is full of God. It is a great matter, whilſt we liue, and are humane, to procure, to bring God to our ſelues, Humane; for, this is that other inconuenience, which I ſay, there is; for, the firſt, I beganne to ſay, was a little want of humilitie, in preſuming to raiſe the Soule, before our Lord raiſed her, and not to content her ſelf, with meditating vpon a thing ſo pretious, but that ſhe will needs be a Marie, before ſhe haue taken the paines of Martha. If our Lord himſelf be pleaſed, that we

be

be Marie, there will be nothing to be feared, though it ſhould be, vpon the verie firſt day, of our doing him Seruice. But yet, let vs conſider well, of the matter, as I thinke I was ſaying before; for, this ſmall moate of little humilitie, will make a ſhift to doe a great deale of hurt, againſt profiting in the way of Contemplation.

But, to returne now to the Second point, We are no Angells, but we haue Bodies; and to deſire, to make our ſelues Angells, whilſt yet we are vpon earth, (and eſpecially if they be ſo earthlie, as I was,) is a kinde of follie, or madnes. But our thoughts, in the ordinarie way, haue need of a kind of leaning, or reſting-place; though yet ſometimes, the Soule may goe ſo out of her ſelf, yea and manie times, may be ſo full of Almightie God, that perhaps ſhe hath no need to recollect her ſelf, by meanes of anie thing created. But this is not a thing ſo ordinarie; and in buſineſſes, and perſecutions, and troubles, when ſhe cannot enioy ſo much Quiet; and in the times alſo of Dryneſſe, and dulneſſe, Chriſt our Lord is wont, to be a very good freind. For, we conſider him, as man; and we behold him, full of weakneſſes, and afflictions; and he is companie, fitt for all good occaſions; and when once, we are a little accuſtomed, we ſhall finde him very eaſily kept cloſe, to vs; though yet ſome ſuch times will occurr, as that we ſhall not be able to doe, neither the one, nor the other.

Vpon this reaſon, it will be well, to doe that, where-

whereof I haue ſpoken already; namely, not to pretend, and procure any ſenſible conſolation of Spirit, but let anie thing ariue, that will; for it is no toy, or trifle, to embrace the Croſſe of our Lord. This Lord of ours, was forſaken, by all manner of comfort; and they left him all alone, in his afflictions; but yet let not vs doe ſo. For he will reach vs his hand, which can raiſe vs better vp, then all our owne diligences, would haue been able to doe; and yet he will abſent himſelf alſo, when he ſhall thinke fitt; and when he ſhall thinke it fitt, he will alſo draw the Soule out of it ſelf, as I haue ſayd before. Our Lord is very well pleaſed, to ſee a Soule, with Humilitie, introduce his Sonne, for her Interceſſour; and he loues her ſo very much, that euen, when his Diuine Maieſtie ſhall haue an inclination to raiſe her-vp to great Contemplation, the ſame Soule may yet hold her ſelf vnworthie, and cry out, with S.Peter: *Depart from me, O my Lord; for I am a ſinnefull man.* I haue tryed this verie thing, by experience; and thus hath God conducted my Soule. Let others therefore goe, by ſome other ſhort cutt, as they pleaſe; but that, which I haue been able to vnderſtand, is, that all this Ciment of Prayer, is grounded vpon Humilitie; and * that, the more the Soule is abaſed in that holie exerciſe, the more is it exalted by Almightie God. Nor doe I remember, that euer he ſhewed me anie of thoſe ſingular Mercies, of which I ſhall ſpeake afterward; but when I found my Soule, euen as it were

* *Beleiue and conſider this moſt certaine Truth.*

were annihilated, with obseruing my self, to be so very wicked. Yea and sometimes, his Diuine Maiestie tooke care to giue me to vnderstand certaine things, towards the making me know my self, so much the better, which I could neuer haue told, how to imagine.

But I am of opinion, that when the Soule doth anie thing on her part, to help her self on, as aforesayd, towards that Prayer of Vnion; howsoeuer, for the present, it may seem to doe good, yet the building will quickly fall, as wanting anie sound foundation; and I am afrayd, that she will neuer ariue to true Pouertie of Spirit, which consists, in not desiring so much as comfort, or gust, in Prayer; (for, all those of this world, are forsaken already, except consolation in affliction; and that, for loue of him, who euer liued in them) but to remaine also quiet in those verie afflictiõs, and aridities; for though they faile not, to haue some little trouble thereat; yet is it not so farre, as to giue them anie such disquiet, and paine, as some giue themselues, by conceiuing, that, if they be not alwaies labouring with their Vnderstanding, and to haue sensible deuotion, all is lost; as if they could deserue so great a good, by the paines they take. I say not, that they should not procure, and maintaine themselues with much care, in the Presence of Almightie God; but, if yet they be not able to obtaine, no not so much, as one good thought (as I haue sayd els where) yet let them not torment themselues; because we all,

all,are vnprofitable Seruants; & what can we conceiue,that wee ſhall be euer able to doe? Our Lord is much better pleaſed, that we may come to know this truth; and that we may hold our ſelues fitt, to be treated, like ſome poore little Aſſes, to turne that wheele about,whereby the ſayd Water is to be gotten; who though they be put in,blindfold,& doe not ſo much as know,what they doe, will yet get-vp more water, then the Gardner, with all the diligences he can vſe. No, we muſt walke in this way,with libertie of Spirit,& put our ſelues into the hands of Almighty God. If his Diuine Maieſtie ſhall be pleaſed,to aduance vs,to be of his Chamber,& Councell,we muſt goe with a good will; but if not,we muſt be content to ſerue, in inferiour employments, and not to ſeate our ſelues, in the beſt place, as I haue ſayd els where.

Almightie God hath more care of vs, then we haue of our ſelues; and knowes, for what, euerie bodie is fitt; and for what therefore doth it ſerue, for him, to gouerne himſelf, when already the whole Will is diſpoſed of, and giuen away, to Almightie God? In my opinion it is leſſe to be tollerated, or endured heer, then in the Firſt Degree of Prayer; and it doth vsmuch more harme, if any ſuch errour be committed by vs; for, theſe are Supernaturall bleſſings. If a man haue an ill voice, how much ſoeuer he ſhall enforce himſelf to ſing, the voice will not be made good by it; but if God ſhall once haue made it good, he needes not be crying out, before hand.

Let

Let vs therefore alwaies humbly pray him, to ſhew vs fauour; & let the Soule be wholy reſigned, but yet withall, confiding in the greatnes of God.

And now, when ſhe hath gotten leaue, to remaine at the feet of Chriſt our Lord, let her not ſtirre from thence, but continue, in what ſort ſoeuer it may be; and let her imitate the *Magdalena*; for when he ſhall find her ſtrong, he will take her vp, with him, to the Deſert. So that your Reuerẽce ſhall doe well, to keepe your ſelf in this way; till you meet with ſome other, who may haue more experience, then I; and may know it better. Only, if they be perſons, who were but beginning to haue guſt in Almightie God, doe not beleiue them; for they conceiue, that they profit themſelues more, and haue more guſt, when they helpe themſelues in ſuch ſort, as is declared before. O, how Almightie God comes clearly, and openly enough, in, without theſe little prettie helpes, when he hath a minde to it? and ſo, as that, whether we will, or no, he eleuates, and hurries-away the Spirit, euen as ſome Giant would diſpoſe of a ſtraw; and ſo, as that no reſiſtance can be thought of. But what a kind of impertinency is it, for a man to beleiue, that whenſoeuer he liſts, a Toade ſhould be made able to flye, of it ſelf? And I hold it to be a more difficult, and abſurd kind of thing, that the Spirit ſhould be able to raiſe, and exalt it ſelf without being exalted, and raiſed by Almightie God; for, it is, all, loaden with earth, and with a thouſand impedi-

impediments; and it will proue, to be of little vse to it, that it haue a minde to flye; for, though flying be more naturall to a Soule, then to a Toade, yet this Soule, is already all plunged in a great bed of durt, & myre, as haueing lost that other qualitie, by her owne fault.

I will therefore conclude with this, that whensoeuer we dispose our selues, to thinke, and meditate vpon Christ our Lord, we must remember the loue, wherewith he did vs so manie Fauours; and how greatly, Almightie God was pleased to shew it to vs, by giuing vs so high a pledge, and pawne, of his loue; for, one loue begetts, and breeds another. And though we should be meer poore beginners, in this holie exercise; and though we should withall, be very wicked, yet let vs still procure, to be looking vpon this Obiect, and still be stirring our selues vp, to loue. For, if once our Blessed Lord vouchsafe, to imprint this loue into our harts, all things will grow easie to vs; and we shall quickly fall to worke, and that without anie trouble to our selues, at all. I beseech his Diuine Maiestie, that he will vouchsafe, to bestow it vpon vs, since he knowes, how very much the same imports vs; for, we begg it, by the great loue, which he bore to vs, and for the sake of his Glorious Sonne, who also loued vs all, so extreamly, to his owne cost, Amen.

One * thing I would faine aske your Reuerence, how our Lord, beginning to doe Fauours to a Soule, and those so eminent, and high, as to

* *A doubt, which cannot easily be solued.*

bring her to perfect Contemplation (which Soule were therefore, in all reason, to grow, and remaine entirely perfect, euen at that instant; for certainly, it ought to be so; since whosoeuer receiues so very great blessings from Heauē, should be extreamly farre from careing for anie such delights, as concerne this life) can possibly bring to passe, that when she growes to haue Rapts, and so to receiue more Fauours, & higher Effects thereof, (and that so much the more, as she falls-out to be more vntyed from the world; and considering yet withall, how, in the very first instant, when our Lord ariues to a Soule, he can leaue her entirely sanctifyed) how, I say, our Lord can abandon this Soule afterward, in processe of time, without maintaining it, in the perfection of vertue. This, I say, would I very faine know; for I vnderstand it not yet; though I know well, that it is a very different case, what proportion of strength, Almightie God leaues in a Soule, when his visitation, at the first, lasts no longer, then the opening, as it were, and shutting of an eye; (for then, in effect, it is scarce felt at all, but only by the very effects, which it leaues behind it) and when, on the other side, this Fauour continues, to be of much longer extent. But it occurrs to mee often, to doubt, whether the cause of this, may not be, that the Soule disposes not her self entirely, for God, till his Diuine Maiestie bring her vp, and breed her for himself, by little, and little; and so, bespeake her to resolue her

ſelf, all at once, and giue her the verie ſtrength of a growne man; to the end, that ſhe may caſt all, as it were, a thouſand miles off; as he inſtantly did with S.Marie Magdalen, and as he alſo doth with others, after the rate of their co-operating with him; and as they ſuffer his Diuine maieſtie to diſpoſe of them wholy, according to his owne good pleaſure; for els, we know not, how to beleiue, that, euen in this life, Almightie God giues a hundred for one. I thought alſo of this Compariſon, That, ſuppoſing the thing to be all one, which is imparted both to Beginners and Proficients, it would be like to ſome one only food, whereof manie feed, all at once; and that they, who eat little of it, preſerue no more memory, and remaine with no more effect of it, then only ſome little ſauour, or ſmack, for a while; but they, who feed more largely, it giues them helpe to ſubſiſt; and they, who feed plentifully on it, receiue encreaſe of ſtrength, and ſpirit, by it; yea and a Soule may feed ſo often, and ſo fully, vpon this food of life, that she may come, not to endure anie thing at all, which shall not taſt, iuſt like that. For she findes the very great benefit, which she receiues by it; and she hath her taſt already, ſo wholy made to that ſweetnes, that she had rather euen leaue to liue, then to feed vpon other things; which, were all, to ſerue, in fine, for nothing, but only to take away the good taſt, which the former excellent food left in her mouth.

Besides, no conuersation, with holie companie, is wont to be of so much vse, and benefit, in one day, as in manie; but we may be in it, so long, as that we may grow, to be euen like them, our selues; if our Lord will be pleased, to doe vs so much fauour. But, to conclude, the mayne busines consists, in what his Diuine Maiestie vouchsafes to doe, and to whome he will be pleased, to allow it; though yet withall, it grow to import very much, that whosoeuer will pretend to receiue this Fauour, must fully resolue himself, to be absolutly dis-engaged, and vntyed from the whole world, yea and to esteem that Fauour of our Blessed Lord, as highly, as the thing deserues.

It also seemes to me, as if his Diuine Maiestie, were resoluing to try, who they are, that loue him; Namely whether it be this Soule, or that; and that he would also discouer, who himself is, by imparting so high, and soueraigne a delight, to quicken, and fortifye their Faith, if it should chance to be dead, or weake, in the beleif of those great blessings, which he meanes to giue her; saying: Behold, this, is but a single dropp, of that huge, and vast Sea of benedictions, which I meane to giue to such, as I loue. And when he sees, that they receiue it, as he giues it, he giues not only it, but himself with it. In fine, he loues them, who loue him; And O, what a good Louer, and good Beloued, is he?

O thou, the Lord of my Soule! O that I could find anie fitt words, whereby I might giue to be vnder-

vnderstood, what thou bestowest vpon such, as trust thee, home; and what they loose, who ariue to this condition, and yet will needs remaine still, with themselues. But doe not, O thou my Lord, permitt this; since already thou dost more, then this, for our sakes, in coming to so base, and wicked a lodging, as this of my hart. Blessed maist thou be, for euer, and for euer, Amen.

And now I returne, most humbly to beseech your Reuerence, that, if you meane to impart these things, which I haue written, concerning my Prayer, they may be very Spirituall persons to whome yow doe it. For if they vnderstand no more, then some one way; or if they haue remained in the half way; they will neuer be so well able, to hitt right. Now, there are some, whome Almightie God carries instantly, by a very sublime kind of addresse; and they perhaps will conceiue, that others, may also profit there, and may quiet, and calme the Vnderstanding; and not serue themselues, at all, of the meanes of anie Corporeall obiect; but yet, these creatures, with all this, shall come, in fine, to remaine as dry, as a stick. And some, who haue growne to enioy a little Quiet, grow also to thinke of this fancie, that, Why, forsooth, may not they be able, to obtaine, as well the one, as the other. But such as these, in stead of aduancing, in the way of profiting their Soules, shall really disaduantage themselues, as I haue sayd. So that, in all this busines, there will be need, both of experience, and prudence; and

I beseech our Lord, grant them to vs, through his owne goodnes.

THE THREE AND TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

She returnes to declare the course of her life; and how she first beganne to thinke of growing to greater perfection; and by what meanes, she did it. This Chapter is very profitable, for such, as are to gouerne Soules, in order to Prayer; and to make them know, how they are to behaue themselues in their beginnings; and of the benefit, she reaped, by knowing it her self.

I will now returne to that place, where I gaue ouer the Discourse of my Life; (for I haue detained my self, perhaps, longer then I ought) to the end, that yet that, which followes, may grow to be the better vnderstood. From hence forward, this will be another new Booke; I meane, another new Life; for hitherto, it was mine; but the Life, which I haue liued, since I beganne to declare these things of Prayer, is that, when God liued in me, (forasmuch as I could conceiue) since I hold it to be impossible otherwise, for me, to haue giuen ouer, both such ill actions, and conditions, in so short a time. Let our Lord be euerlastingly praised, for deliuering me, in such sort, from my self.

But

But I beginning now, to free my Soule from the occasions of ill, and to giue my self more to Prayer, our Lord beganne also to doe me Fauours; as one, who, in all apparance, desired but that I would be content to receiue them. His Diuine Maiestie, did therefore then, very ordinarily, giue me the Prayer of Quiet; and, manie times, that also, of Vnion, which lasted very long fitts of time, But now, when I vnderstood, that there had occurred great Illusions of certaine woemen, and deceipts, which the Diuel put vpon them, I beganne to be afrayd, as considering the delight, and sweetnes, which I felt, to be so very great; yea and that, manie times, it was such, that I could not auoyd it; though yet withall, on the other side, I saw cause of very great securitie, that it was God; especially when I was in Prayer; and I found also, that I was much bettered by it; and still remained with more strength of Minde towardes Vertue. But yet, whensoeuer I grew to be a little diuerted, I returned againe to feare, whether the Diuel might not haue a minde, to make me conceiue, that it were good for me, to suspend the vse of my vnderstanding, and so, depriue my self of the exercise of Mentall Prayer; and that I might not be able to thinke vpon the Passion of Christ our Lord, nor to serue my self (as I was saying) of my Vnderstanding part, which seemed to me, a very great inconuenience. But now, when his Diuine Maiestie was pleased already, to giue me light, to the end that I might offend him no more; and

might alſo grow able to know, how much I owed him for this goodnes, this feare came now to encreaſe, in ſuch ſort, that it put me, vpon a diligent * ſearch, after ſome perſons of Spirit, with whome I might communicate my affaires; and already I had gotten notice of ſome. For, by this time, they, *of the Societie of* IESVS, were come hither; to which Order (though I yet knew no one of them) I was very affectionate, vpon the onlie reaſon of my vnderſtanding, what kind of life they led, and what Prayer they vſed. But I found not my ſelf worthie enough, to ſpeake with them; nor conſtant, and ſtrong enough, to obey them. And this, gaue me yet greater feare; for, in fine, to treat with them, and yet to continue ſtill, what I was, repreſented it ſelf to me, as an odd, and ill-fauoured buſines. In theſe cogitations of mine, did I paſſe ſome time; till now, by the much batterie, which I made vpon my ſelf, and through the feares, to which ſtill I was ſubiect, I reſolued to treat with one, who was a Spirituall perſon; and to aske him, what kind of Prayer that was, which I vſed; and to deſire him, to giue me light, if he found me to be in errour; and I reſolued to vſe all poſſible diligence, not to offend Almightie God; for, the want, which I found, in my ſelf, of courage, did continue me ſtill, in my feares. O my deare God! & how great a deceipt, and errour was this, in me, to ſeperate my ſelf from good, that ſo I might grow to be good. The Diuel, it ſeemes, is willing to labour much, vpon this point

** She grovves novv to make ſerious enquiry after a good Directour.*

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point, in the beginning of our aſpiring to Vertue; for I could not, in fine, conquer my ſelf heerin. He well knowes, that the meanes of doing good to a Soule, conſiſts, in that ſhe reſolue to conferr, in particular manner, with ſuch, as are the freinds of Almightie God; and therefore I would neuer ſett anie time, to reſolue vpon this. I expected to reforme my ſelf firſt, as I had alſo done before, when I left my Prayer; and perhaps I ſhould neuer haue gone through, with it; for I was already declined ſo low, towards certaine little things, of ill cuſtome, and conſequence, (which yet in fine I would not conclude, to be ill) that I was in need, to be aſſiſted, by ſome other, who might reach me out his hand, to raiſe me vp. And now, Bleſſed be our Lord; for, in fine, his owne, was the firſt.

When now I ſaw, that my feare came-on ſo farre, (for I proceeded, and encreaſed in Prayer) I conceaued, that there was either ſome great good, or els ſome exceſſiue miſcheif, inuolued in it; for already I vnderſtood, very well, that it was a Supernaturall aduantage, which I had; ſince ſometimes, I was not able to reſiſt it; and to obtaine it alſo, when I would, could not poſſibly be done. Vpon this, I grew to reſolue, that there would be no remedie for me, if I * procured not, to haue great puritie of Cõſcience, and if I quitted not all occaſions of ill; though it were but of Veniall Sinnes. For, if my exerciſe of Prayer, were of the Spirit of Almightie God, the benefit did

* *The only excellent courſe.*

very euidently appeare; & if it were of the Diuel, yet he could doe me no hurt at all, but rather would be put to sitt downe with losse, if I should procure to please Almightie God, and not offend him at all. And now, hauing resolued vpon this, and euer humbly praying our Blessed Lord, that he would assist me; and taking the same course seuerall dayes; I yet found, that my Soule, had not strẽgth enough, all alone, to goe through, with the obtaining so great perfection, in regard of some inclination, and liking, which I carried to certaine things; which, howsoeuer they were not very ill, of themselues, yet they serued the turne, to spoile all. They told me then, of a certaine Preist, in this place, who was a learned man; and whose vertue, and good life, our Lord began to discouer to the world; and I procured, by meanes of a holie* Cauallier, dwelling in the same place, to acquaint my self with him. This Cauallier is a married man; but yet leades a life, so very full of example, and vertue, and he is of so great Prayer, and Charitie, that his perfection shines brightly, in the eyes of all men; and with much reason, in regard of the great good, which is growne to manie Soules, by his meanes; as also by his great talẽts. And though he be not forwarded a whitt, by anie plentie in his Fortune; yet he cannot choose, but employ the meanes he hath, that way. He is of great vnderstanding, and of an excellent nature. His conuersation, is no way troublesome; but so agreable, and delight full, (togeather with his being iust, and holie

*This holy mã, enters often into the Story of our Saynt.

holie.) that it giues guſt to all ſuch, as treat with him. He ordaines, and gouernes all things, for the great good of ſuch Soules, as he conuerſes with; and ſeemes, indeed, to haue no other endeauour, or ayme, then to doe good to all them, whome he findes to be anie way capable thereof; and, finally, to giue contentment to all. Now, this holie, and bleſſed man, doe I eſteem, to haue, by his induſtrie, and charitie, layd the foundation, for the ſaluation of my Soule. And I am confunded, to thinke of his humilitie, in that he would be content, to ſee me; for there were, as I conceiue, little leſſe then fortie yeares, wherein he had exerciſed Mentall Prayer (they might perhaps be fewer, by two, or three yeares,) and he led his life, with all that perfection, which his condition, and ſtate, might ſeem to permit. He hath a Wife, who is ſo great a Seruant of Almightie God, and a woeman, ſo full of charitie, that he looſes nothing at all, by poſſeſſing her. In a word, he choſe her for ſuch a kind of Wife, as whome Almightie God, knew to be fitt for ſo great a Seruant of his. ſome of his kindred, were married to ſome kinſwoemen of mine. And beſides, I was alſo acquainted with another great Seruant of God, who was married to one of my Coſen-Germans; and I had much acquaintance, there; and, by this meanes, I procured, that the Preiſt, who was his great freind, and withall, ſo great a Seruant of God, might come, and ſpeake with me; for I intended to Confeſſe my ſelf to him;

Gaſpar Laza-

him; and to haue him, for my Directour. And now, that Cauallier conducting him to me, to the end, that we might ſpeake togeather, and I, remaining with extreame confuſion, to ſee my ſelf in the preſence of ſo holie a man, gaue him ſome knowledge of my Soule, and of the Prayer, which I vſed; for he excuſed himſelf, from taking my Confeſſion, as telling me, that he was very full of buſineſſe; and ſo indeed, he was. As for him, he determined with a holie kind of reſolution, to conduct me, as a perſon, who was confirmed, and ſtrong (for indeed I was to haue been ſo, in all reaſon, according to the Prayer, which he ſaw, I held) that ſo I might no more offend Almightie God, in the leaſt degree. But when I ſo quickly found his reſolution, concerning thoſe little things, from which, as I ſayd, I had not the courage to depart inſtantly, with ſo great perfection, I was much afflicted; and when I alſo found, that he meant, to carrie the buſines of my Soule, after ſuch manner, as if he would make an end, as it were, all at once, by diſpoſing, and ſetling thereof, I ſaw, that I had need of much more conſideration, and care, to be vſed towards me, then that. In a word, I was of opinion, that the meanes, which he preſcribed, were not they, whereby my remedie was to be procured; for they were proper for a Soule, which had been more perfect, then mine. But as for me, though I had proceeded very farre (in as much, as might concerne the Fauours of Almightie God, to my Soule)

Soule) yet for as much, as concerned Vertue, and Mortification, I was but in the verie beginnings thereof. And certainly, I conceiue, that if I had not been to treat with anie other then him, my Soule would neuer haue improued, and thriued. For, through the affliction, which it gaue me, to see, how I did not, yea and how (as I thought) I could not, doe that, which he prescribed, it was enough, to make me loose my hope, and to giue ouer the whole busines. Sometimes I am apt to maruaile, that Almightie God was not pleased, to let this Seruant of his, the holie Prieſt, receiue a perfect knowledge of my Soule; nor to encharge himself, with the care thereof; since he is a person, who hath a particular facilitie, and grace, in beginning to gaine Soules to his Diuine Maiestie. But I see, that all this, hapned for my greater good, that so I might come to know, and conuerse with so holie men, as they, *of the Societie of* IESVS, are.

But, in the meane time, I remained in agreement with that Cauallier, of whome I spake, that now and then, he should doe me the Fauour, to visit me; and heer, I discerned his great humilitie; since he would be contented, to conuerse with so wicked a Creature, as my self. He beganne therefore then, to visit me, and to encourage me, and to tell me, that I must not thinke, to deliuer my self, from all my imperfections, in one day; but that, by little and little, Almightie God would doe it; and that himself, had remained some

ſome whole yeares, in reforming ſome verie little light things, as not being able to finiſh the worke, ſooner. O Humilitie! how great bleſſings doſt thou beſtow vpon them, with whome thou remaineſt? yea and euen vpon thoſe others alſo, who doe but euen approach, to the poſſeſſours thereof.

This Saint (for, in my opinion, I may well giue him this name, with great reaſon) related certaine particulars to me, concerning himſelfe, which, through his humilitie, ſeemed weakneſſes, to him; but he did it, for my remedie, and redreſſe; and, conſidering his condition, and way of life, they imported neither fault, nor imperfection; but, as for me, it was a very great one, to be ſubiect to them. Nor doe I ſay thus much, by chance, though perhaps I extend my ſelf too farre, in ſpeaking of theſe verie little things; but they import ſo much, for bringing a Soule, into the way of profiting in Spirit, and for getting her out, to flye, which hath ſcarce gotten yet, anie feathers, that no bodie, who hath not experience of it, will beleiue it. And I affirme theſe things heer, the rather, becauſe I hope in Almightie God, that this, which I am ſaying now, will doe much good. For, all my helpe, and hope, conſiſted in finding out the way, how to cure me; and in their exerciſing Humilitie, and Charitie, towards me; yea and to haue patience alſo, in perceiuing, that I did not inſtantly, and entirely, amend my ſelf. And this man, went with diſcretion, by little,

and

and little; and shewed me diuerse wayes, how to ouercome the Diuel. In the meane time, I beganne to carrie so entire an affection to him, that I could not receaue a greater ease, and ioy, then to liue that day, when I might see him; though they were but few. When he delayed his Visits, I was very much, and very quickly troubled at it; as doubting, that he forbore to see me, because I was so wicked. When he came to know my so great imperfections (yea and euen they might reach, to be Sinnes; though yet, after I had beganne to treat with him, I was somewhat mended) and when I informed him also of the Fauours, which Almightie God had been pleased to doe me, to the end that he might giue me light, he told me, that all those seuerall things, did not suite very well, with one another; and that those Regalo's were not belonging, but to persons, who were already very much improued, and mortifyed; That, for his part, he could not forbeare, to be much afrayd, because it seemed * to him, that there appeared an euill Spirit, in some things, though yet he would not absolutly resolue it; but he wished that I should consider very well, of whatsoeuer I vnderstood, concerning my Prayer, and so relate it to him. Now heer, the great trouble was, that I could tell him nothing at all, of what my Prayer was; for indeed, it is not long, since Almightie God hath done me the Fauour, of knowing, either how to vnderstand it, or declare it.

* *This vvas no improbable opinion, though it vvere no true one.*

But

But, as ſoone as he had expreſſed himſelf to mee, the affliction, which I had, was great; and the teares, which I ſhed, were manie, through the feare I had. For certainly, I deſired to ſerue, and pleaſe Almightie God, and I knew not how to perſwade my ſelf, that it was of the Diuel; only I feared, leaſt, for my great ſinnes, our Lord might blind me ſo farre, as that I could not vnderſtand it. But then, turning ouer ſome Bookes, to ſee if I could meet with anie thing, concerning my Prayer, I found in one, which is called: *The Aſcent to the Mountaine*, (in that particular, which concernes the Vnion of a Soule with Almightie God) all thoſe ſignes, which I had, in that ſtate, of my not being able, to thinke of anie thing; for, this was that, of which I ſpake moſt; that, Namely, I could not thinke of anie thing, in diſtinct manner, when I had that Prayer; and I marked, and noted thoſe places, with certaine lines, wherein that paſſage was contained; and then I deliuered him the Booke, to the end, that both himſelf, and that holie Prieſt, and Seruant of God, of whome I ſpake before, might conſider it, and make me know, what I was to doe; and whether, perhaps, they might be of opinion, that I was to giue-ouer my Prayer, altogeather. For, in fine, to what purpoſe, was I to thruſt my ſelf, into thoſe dangers, if now (after I had vſed this Prayer, for almoſt twentie yeares togeather) I had made no other benefit thereof, but to be ſubiect, to the deceipts of the Diuel; and that there-

therefore, it were better for me, not to vſe this Prayer at all; though yet, it be alſo true, that this, ſhewed it ſelf, as a very ſad, and hard caſe, to me, ſince already I had found by experience, how ill it went with my Soule, without the exerciſe of Prayer. So that now, I could ſee nothing but miſerie, on all ſides; like one, who were caſt into a Riuer, and to which ſide ſoeuer he ſhould goe, he might ſtill haue the more danger to feare; and were ſo, come, to the verie point, as it were, of drowning.

This is a very mightie affliction; and, of this kind, I haue endured manie; as I ſhall declare afterward. For though, perhaps, it may ſeem, not to import, yet peraduenture, it may indeed proue to be of vſe, towards the vnderſtanding, of how a Spirit, is to be tryed. For certainly, the affliction, which vſes to be endured in theſe caſes, is very great; and there is need of a nice hand, and of a warye foot, eſpecially, when men treat with woemen; for, our weaknes is very great; and much miſcheif may chance to ariue, by telling vs, that ſuch, or ſuch a thing, is certainly the Diuel, without conſidering it, firſt, very well, and remouing vs from thoſe dangers, which may occurr; and aduiſing vs, to keep things very priuate; and that they alſo be carefull thereof themſelues; for this is fitt. And heerin, it is I, who ſpeake, as one, who haue endured affliction enough, for not hauing had fitt perſons, with whome I might conferr, about my Prayer, but by asking, firſt one,

and then another, what might doe me good; which hath done me hurt enough. For now, diuerſe things haue growne to be publique, which might well haue remained very priuate, ſince they are not, for euerie bodie's vnderſtanding; and beſides, it may haue ſeemed, as if they had been diuulged by me. I well beleiue, that thoſe others did it, without anie fault in them, but that our Lord was pleaſed, to permit it, to the end, that I might ſuffer by it. I am farre from ſaying, yea or ſo much as thinking, as if anie of them, related anie ſuch particular, as had paſſed from me to them, in Confeſſion; for there was no ſuch matter; but yet, in regard it came from me, to ſuch perſons, as to whome, in the way of conference, I gaue account of my feares, to the end, that they might aſſiſt me, with giuing me light, me thinkes, they might haue kept my counſaile. But howſoeuer, I durſt neuer conceale anie thing, from ſuch perſons, in ſuch occaſions, as thoſe. I ſay therefore, that ſuch as I was then, muſt be counſailed, with much diſcretion; and animated; and time muſt be expected; for our Bleſſed Lord will helpe them, as he did me; which if he had not done, the preiudice, which I ſhould haue ſuffered, would haue been extreame, by reaſon of my being ſo full of apprehenſions, and feares; and eſpecially, conſidering to how great palpitations of hart, I was ſubiect, I wonder, how this other accident, did me not more hurt.

When therefore I had deliuered this Booke, and made a relation of my Life, and of my Sinnes, the

the beſt I could,(though yet in groſſe; for I did it not, in the way of Confeſſion, in regard he was a Secular perſon; though yet ſtill, I made him vnderſtand, how wicked I was) thoſe two Seruants of Almightie God, conſidered with great charitie, and loue, what might be conuenient for me, to doe. Now, the Anſwer being readie, which I expected with feare enough; and I hauing recommended my ſelf, at that time, to manie perſons, that they might recommend me ouer, to Almightie God; and my ſelf alſo hauing been much in Prayer, with affliction enough of hart, to my ſelf, the Cauallier came to me at length, and told me, that, in the opinion, both of himſelf, and of the other, it was the Diuel; and that the thing, which would be fitt for me to doe, was, to treat about this buſines, with a certaine Father *of the Societie of* IESVS; who, if I would call him to me, & declare, that I was in neceſſitie of his helpe, would not faile to come; and that I ſhould giue him an account of my whole life, by way of making a Generall Confeſſion, as alſo otherwiſe, of my condition; and that I muſt proceed, in all things, with much clearnes; and that then, in vertue of the Sacrament of Confeſſion, Almightie God would giue him more light, wherewith to direct me; and that they were men of great experience, in matter of Spirit; but that I ſhould doe well, to be very carefull, not to ſwarue a whitt, from what he ſayd; for that I would find my ſelf, in much danger, if I wanted one, to gouerne, and direct my Soule.

As for mee, he put me now into ſo great feare, and paine, that I knew not, what to doe with my ſelf; and now, there was nothing with me, but weeping. And being one day, very much afflicted in an Oratorie, I fell vpon reading a certaine Booke, which it ſeemes, our Lord brought to my hands; and S. Paul is cited there, ſaying, That *God is very faithfull*; and that *he neuer ſuffers them, vvho loue him, to be tempted, aboue their ſtrength.* This comforted me very much; and I beganne to conſider, about making my Generall Confeſſion; and to * put in writing, all the Sinnes, and Bleſſings, with the courſe, and proceeding of my whole life, the moſt clearly, that I vnderſtood, and knew, how to doe; without leauing anie little thing out. And I remember, that, when I read ouer, what I had written, and ſaw ſo manie Sinnes to haue been committed by me; and, in effect, no good at all, to haue been done; it gaue me an extreame affliction, and ſorrow of hart. It alſo put me to ſome trouble, that they of the Houſe, ſhould ſee me treat, and conuerſe with ſo holie people, as they, *of the Societie of* IESVS, are; for I was afraid of mine owne wickednes; and me thought, I ſhould be obliged, by that meanes, to be wicked, no more; and to giue-ouer my entertainments, and paſſe-times; and that, if I did not this, it would be worſe with me; So that I procured, both with the Portreſſe, and with the Sacriſtin, that they ſhould not ſpeake thereof. But this ſerued my turne, to little purpoſe; for there chanced to be one at the Gate, when

* *So good a beginning, vvas almoſt, a kind of perfecting the vvorke.*

when I was called, who publiſhed it, ouer all the Conuent.

But now, what difficulties, and troubles, and feares, doth the Diuel vſe to prouide, for ſuch perſons, as diſpoſe themſelues, to approach to Almightie God? When I was treating with that Seruant of his Diuine Maieſtie (who was greatly ſo, and a man alſo of very good diſcretion) about the paſſages of my whole life, and of my Soule, he declared to me, what euerie thing was; as a man, who vnderſtood that language, very well; and he encouraged me much, and told me, that it was euidently, the Spirit of Almightie God, which wrought in me; *But that I muſt returne againe, to the exerciſe of Prayer, becauſe I was not well grounded therein, nor had ſo much as begunne to know, what Mortification meant, (and this, was very true; for I had hardly euer well vnderſtood, ſo much as the name) but that I ſhould, by no meanes, giue-ouer my Prayer, but rather employ my ſelf, with more diligence, and endeauour, therein; ſince Almightie God, had been pleaſed, to doe me ſo particular Fauours; and what (ſayd he) could anie bodie tell, whether it might not pleaſe our Lord, to doe good to manie, euen by your meanes? Other things alſo he ſayd, in ſuch ſort, as that he might ſeem, euen to haue prophecyed then, concerning thoſe things, which our Lord was pleaſed to grant, and effect, afterward. And I ſhould be ſubiect, to very great blame, if I correſponded not with thoſe Fauours,

* *The Sayne begann heer, to be happy.*

which our Lord vouchſafed to ſhew me. In all things, it ſeemed to me, that the Holie Ghoſt ſpake to me, by this Father, in order to the Cure of my Soule; ſo diſtinctly grew euerie thing, to be imprinted therein. He put me to great confuſion; and directed me, by ſuch meanes, to proceed, that he ſeemed to make me abſolutly, euen another Creature: So great a thing it is, to vnderſtand a Soule. He willed me, euerie day, to meditate vpon ſome paſſage of the Paſſion of our Bleſſed Lord; and that I ſhould helpe my ſelf thereby; and that I ſhould not thinke, but vpon his Holie Humanitie; and that I ſhould reſiſt thoſe recollections, and guſts, as much as I could; and not giue place to them, till he ſhould expreſse himſelfe to me, by ſome other order.

He left me, both comforted, and ſtrengthned; and our Lord aſſiſted both me, and him, to the end, that he might vnderſtand my condition, and in what ſort, I was to gouerne my ſelf; and I, remained with a reſolution, not to ſwarue at all, from anie thing, which he had, or ſhould cõmand me; and therein, haue I continued, till this verie day. Our Lord be bleſſed, and praiſed, for hauing giuen me grace, to obey my Ghoſtlie Fathers, though yet, after an imperfect manner; and they, haue, in effect, euer been, theſe bleſſed men, *of the Societie of* IESVS; howſoeuer (as I was ſaying) I haue followed them, after an imperfect manner. But now, my Soule beganne to receiue an euident

dent kind of amendment, and improuement; as I will heer declare.

THE FOWRE AND TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

She prosecutes the former Discourse; and shewes, how her Soule went profiting, when once she had begunne to obey. She also declares, for how little purpose it serued, to resist the Fauours of Almightie God; And how his Diuine Maiestie went daily imparting them to her, after a more compleat manner.

BVt now my Soule remained so supple, and tractable, by meanes of this last Confession of mine, that I thought, there could be nothing, to which I would not dispose my self; and so I instantly beganne to change, in manie things, though yet my Ghostlie Father did not * presse me much, but rather seemed to make little account of them. And this, wrought euen so much the more vpon me; for he carried me rather on, by way of giuing me certaine libertie, in little things; then of pressure; vnlesse my selfe could find in my hart, to doe it for Loue. In the meane time, I continued, vpon the point of two moneths, vsing all the diligence, that possibly I could, to resist the Fauours, and Regalo's of Almightie God. As for my exteriour conuersation, and

* *This was a wise man, & likely to worke wonders vpon a Soule.*

proceeding, there was already an apparant change to be seen, in me; for already, our Blessed Lord, beganne, to giue me courage, to doe certaine things, which the persons, who saw, and knew me, held to be extreame; and euen, in the verie House it self, and in respect of what I was wont to doe before, they might, indeed, be accounted, to hang that way; though yet still, it all, fell short enough of that, to which I was obliged, both by the Habit, which I had taken, and by the Profession also, which I had made. From that resistance, which I made, to the gusts, and Regalo's of Almightie God, I gained thus much, that his Diuine Maiestie came to be pleased, to be my Instructour himself. For before, it seemed, that, for the disposing me, towards the receiuing of anie such Regalo's, as those, there was need, that I should retire, and shut my self, as it were, vp, into corners; and I also durst not, as it were, moue, or stirre. But afterward, I quickly found, how little, all that, serued to the purpose; for, when I procured to diuert my self most, so much the more did our Blessed Lord couer me, as it were, all ouer, with that kind of Suauitie, and glorie, as seemed, euen to compasse me in, on euerie side; in such sort, as that it was not possible for me, to scape from it. And really, so it was; for, as for me, I tooke so much care to decline it, that it did euen put me to paine; and yet our Lord was pleased, euen still, to haue more care, to be doing me Fauours; and to expresse himself, that

that way, (in thoſe two moneths I ſay) much more, then he had formerly done; to the end, that I might, the better, know, that this buſines did now, no longer, depend, anie way, vpon my ſelf.

And now, I beganne to grow to carry a new, and freſh kind of loue, towards the moſt Sacred Humanitie of our Bleſſed Lord; and my Prayer beganne to ſettle it ſelf, like a Building, which now had morter in it, that might make the parts ſtick togeather; and I beganne alſo, to incline my ſelf more, to the doing of Pennance, wherein I was growne a little ſlack, by reaſon of my ſo great infirmities. For, that holie man, to whome I made my Confeſſion, told me, that ſome kindes of Pennance, which he named, would doe me no hurt; and that, perhaps, Almightie God gaue me ſicknes, in the qualitie of Pennance, ſince I would impoſe none, vpon my ſelf. He willed me alſo, to doe certaine acts of Mortification, which were not very pleaſing to me; though yet, I went-through with them all; becauſe it ſeemed to me, as if our Lord himſelf had commanded them; and his Diuine Maieſtie, gaue him alſo grace, to direct them, in ſuch ſort, as that I ſhould be glad to obey him. My Soule went then greatly feeling euerie offence, which I might committ againſt Almightie God, how light, or ſmall ſoeuer, the ſame might be; in ſuch ſort, and to ſo high a proportion, as that, if I did but weare anie one little ſuperfluous thing about

me, I was not able to recollect my self, till I had put it off. I made much Prayer to our Blessed Lord, that he would be pleased to protect me still; and that, since I conuersed, and treated the busines of my Soule, with his Seruants, he would neuer permitt, that I should returne back againe; for I conceiued, that that, would be a strange offence in me; yea and that euen they, would grow to loose credit by it, vpon my occasion.

1537 At this time, came to this place, Father *Francis Borgia*, who had been Duke of *Gandia*, and who already, some yeares before, had left all, and had entred into *The Societie of* IESVS. And now, my Ghostlie Father, as also the Cauallier, of whome I spoke before, came to me, with desire, that I would speake with Father *Borgia*; and that I would also giue him account, of the Prayer I held; for they knew, that the said Father *Borgia*, was a person, * farre aduanced, in being much fauoured, and regaled, by Almightie God; and that, as one, who had left very much, in this world, for the loue of our Lord, he was resolued to pay him for it, euen here. When Father *Borgia* had heard me, he told me, that it was the Spirit of Almightie God; and that he was of opinion, that now, it was fitt, no longer to resist his Fauours; though yet, till then, he thought it to haue been well done. But that I should alwaies beginne my Prayer, with the consideration of some passage of the Passion; and if afterward, our Blessed Lord would eleuate the Spirit, I should not resist it, but suffer

** He lost nothing, by leaueing to be a Duke, for Gods sake.*

ſuffer his Diuine Maieſtie to carrie it away; prouided alwaies, that my ſelf ſhould not haue anie hand, in procuring it. But he, in fine, as being a man, who had trauailed farre already, in that way, did giue me, both counſaile, and phiſick. For, experience is a great matter, in theſe affaires; and he ſayd, it was an errour, to reſiſt the Fauours of Almightie God, now, anie longer. My ſelf was greatly comforted by this; and ſo alſo was the Cauallier; and he reioyced much to heare Father *Borgia* ſay, that it was of Almightie God; and he alſo aduiſed, and aſſiſted me, in what he could; which was very much.

About this time, they changed my Ghoſtlie Father, from that place, to another, which I reſented extreamly; for I thought, I was to turne wicked, againe; as alſo, I conceiued, that it would not be poſſible, that euer I ſhould finde another, like him. My Soule was full of diſcomforts, and feares, euen as if it had been planted in a kind of Deſert; nor did I know, in fine, what to doe with my ſelf. A certaine Kinſwoeman of mine, procured then, to carrie me along with her, to her Houſe; and I procured alſo to goe, the rather, that ſo I might get another Confeſſarius, *of the Societie of* IESVS. Our Lord was alſo pleaſed then, that I ſhould make freindſhip with a certaine Ladie, a Widdow, who was both of much qualitie, and of great Prayer, and ſhe conuerſed very much, with the Fathers of the ſayd *Societie*; and ſhe drew me alſo to Confeſſe, to her Confeſſarius.

rius. I remained a good while, in her house; for she liued neer me; and I was glad, to treat much with those Fathers; for euen by the only vnderstanding, which I came to haue, of the sanctitie of their conuersation, and way of proceeding, the profit, which my Soule found, and felt, was great. This Father, beganne to addresse me, and engage me vpon wayes of more Perfection. He told me, that, for the giuing Almightie God entire contentment, and gust, there was nothing to be left vndone; But this * he sayd, with a great deale of prudence, and sweetnes; for my Soule was not yet, anie thing strong, but green, and tender; especially in the point of giuing-ouer certaine freindships, which I maintained at that time; for though I offended not Almightie God thereby; yet the affection, which I bore them, was very great; and I held it, to be a kind of ingratitude, to giue them ouer. And so I also told him, that since Almightie God was not offended by it, what reason could there be, why I should become vngratefull? He sayd, I should doe well, to recommended it, to Almightie God, for some dayes, and to recite the Hymne of *Veni Creator Spiritus*, &c, that so the Holie-Ghost might giue me light, to doe that, which was best. Hauing therefore been, one day, much in Prayer, and humbly beseeching our Blessed Lord, that he would assist me, to please him, in all things, I beganne the Hymne; and whilst I was saying it, there came a Rapt vpon me, so instātly, and so suddainly

** This must needs haue been, a holy, and a vvise man.*

ly, that it tooke me, as it were, out of my self; and of this, I could not doubt; for it was very euident; and it was also, the verie first time, that our Lord shewed me the Fauour of Rapts; and then I heard these * words from him: *I vvill not haue thee novv, hold conuersation vvith men, but vvith Angells.* This gaue me a great amazement; for, the commotion of the Soule was great; and those words were spoken to me, in the verie interiour part of the Spirit; so that they made me afrayd; though yet, on the other side, they gaue me also great consolation, which, vpon the verie flight of that feare, (which had, in my opinion, caused that strange noueltie,) did still remaine with me. The truth is, that this Speech of our Lord, hath been very well accomplished, and performed; for, neuer haue I been euen able, anie more, to establish anie freindship at all, nor to feele anie consolation, nor entertaine anie particular loue towards anie other person, then such, as I vnderstand, and know, to loue Almightie God, and to procure to serue him. Nor is it now, anie longer, in my hand, or power, nor serues it a whitt, to the purpose, whether any of them be kindred, or friends, or no; for, if I vnderstand not, that he is the Seruant of Almightie God, or a person addicted to Prayer, it is no lesse, then a heauie crosse for me, to conuerse much, with anie Creature. And this is certainly true, to the vttermost of what I can iudge of my self.

* *A little of this, goes farr.*

From

From that day forward, I haue remained full of courage, and resolution, to leaue the whole world, for Almightie God; in regard he had been pleased, in that verie moment (for it seemed no more to me, then a verie moment) to make this Seruant of his, become wholy, another Creature, then what she had been. So that now, there was no longer need, that they should command me, in that particular, anie more; for, when my Ghostlie Father, had found me, to be so fixed vpon this point, he had not yet aduentured to will me expresly, to doe it. For he did, without all doubt, expect, that our Lord should be pleased, to doe it himself, as, indeed, he did; nor yet could I euer imagine, that it would proue to take effect with me, as yet it fell out to doe; because already, I had vsed some endeauours that way; and the affliction, which I receiued by it, was so great, that I resolued to giue ouer the attempt, as being a thing, which I held not to be inconuenient, to continue. But now heer, our Blessed Lord, imparted both libertie, and strength to me, to put it in execution. I told this verie thing, to my Ghostlie Father; and I gaue ouer that freindship, according to what I had been commanded. And it did them no little good, with whome I had been wont to conuerse, to see this resolution growne in me. Almightie God be euer blessed, and praised, who gaue me that libertie, and power, in one * moment, which I had not been able to purchase, and obtaine of my self, by the multitude of those great

* *So true it is, that God is God.*

great diligences, which I had vſed, manie yeares, in order to this end; though yet, I had employed my ſelf, ſo earneſtly, vpon this attempt, that it had coſt me, a good part of my health. But now, this hauing been wrought, and granted by him, who is the Omnipotent, and true Lord of all Creatures, it put me not, euen to the leaſt paine, or trouble, at all.

THE FIVE AND TWENTIETH CHAPTER,

She treats heer, of the vvay, and manner, of vnderſtanding thoſe vvords, or ſpeeches, vvhich Almightie God is pleaſed to vtter to the Soule, though yet vvithout hearing anie voice, or ſound; and of ſome errours, or abuſes, vvhich may happen heerin; and, hovv the right, may be knovvne, from the vvrong. It is of much vſe, and profit, for ſuch, as ſee themſelues in this Degree of Prayer; for it is declared very vvell; and the Doctrine containes great inſtruction.

ME thinkes, it ſhould doe well, to declare, what kind of thing, this Speech is, which our Lord expreſſes to the Soule; and what ſhe alſo feeles; to the end, that your Reuerence may vnderſtand it; for, from this verie time, when our

our Lord did me this Fauour, (as I haue ſayd) the ſame thing is very vſuall with me, euen till this verie preſent; as I ſhall let you ſee, by that which followes. I ſay therefore, that they are certaine Words, very diſtinctly formed; and that, howſoeuer they be not heard, with our eares, of fleſh and bloud, yet are they vnderſtood, much more expreſly, and clearly, then if they were ſo heard. And to ſeeke to forbeare to vnderſtand them, yea and to reſiſt the vnderſtanding them, (how much ſoeuer it may be) is a vanitie, and a moſt impoſſible thing. When, in this world, we haue a minde, not to heare, we may ſtopp our eares, or els attend to other things, if we will; in ſuch ſort, as that, although, peraduenture, we may heare the words, yet we ſhall not, in that caſe, vnderſtand them. But *now, in this diſcourſe, which Almightie God makes to the Soule, there is no remedie at all, but they make me harken to them, whether I will, or no; & they oblige the Vnderſtāding, to be very entire, & attentiue, for the cōprehending thereof. For he, who is able to doe all things, is reſolued, that we ſhall vnderſtand him; and that, which he reſolues, muſt be done; and ſo he comes to be knowne, to be the true Lord of vs all. I haue very well experimented this truth; for, the reſiſtance, which I made him, did laſt, vpon the point of two yeares, through the great feare, wherein I was; yea and euen now, I make thoſe tryalls ſometimes, but it ſerues me to little purpoſe. I would faine declare the errours, and abuſes, which

** The mighty force, and powver of any one Supernaturall vvord.*

which may heer occurr; though, for a man, who hath much experience, me thinkes, there ſhould be few, or none. But indeed, the ſayd experience, would be great; as namely, to know the difference, when the Spirit is good; and when it is ill; and when perhaps, the thing may alſo be, but an apprehenſion of the verie Vnderſtanding it ſelf, which may occurr; or when the verie Spirit it ſelf, may ſpeake, to the verie ſelf-ſame Spirit; and I know not very well, whether this may happen, or no; though euen this verie day, I had a kind of opinion, that it might.

When theſe Words are indeed, of Almightie God, I haue found the truth thereof, in manie things, which were told me, two or three yeares before; and they all fell out, to proue true; and till now, not anie one of them, failed. There are alſo other things, whereby it growes to proue, very plaine, that the Spirit is of God; as I will declare afterward.

To*me it ſeemes, that a perſon, recommending a thing to Almightie God, with great earneſtnes, and apprehenſion, may grow to make himſelf conceiue, that he comes to vnderſtand, in ſome ſort, whether the thing ſhall be done, or no; and this, I ſay, is very poſſible; but he, who vnderſtands things, after this other manner, will clearly diſcouer, what it may be; ſo great a difference there is, between the two. And if indeed, it be a thing, which the Vnderſtanding deuiſes, and makes, (how ſubtily, and how delicately ſoeuer, the

** The infinit differēce, betvveē Supernaturall vvords of God, & all other.*

matter goe) he vnderſtands, that there is ſome part of himſelf, in that, which is ordained, and ſayd. For, it is no other thing, then for a man to ſet a Diſcourſe on foot; or to harken, to what another man ſayes; for then, the Vnderſtanding findes, that it doth not harken then, becauſe it workes; and the words, which it goes framing, in that caſe, are, as it were, fantaſticall, and mute, and confuſed; and are not deliuered with that clearnes, which thoſe others haue. And now heer, it is in our owne power, to diuert our ſelues, or els to hold our peace, when we ſpeake; but in this other caſe, we haue no ſuch power at all.

Another ſigne there is, which is of more importance, then all the reſt; for, theſe things, which are ſayd by our ſelues, haue no manner of operation, and worke no effect, at all; But the other, when our Lord is pleaſed to ſpeake, is not only of words, but workes; and though they be not words of deuotion, but of reprehenſion, they inſtantly diſpoſe the Soule, and they enable her, and make her relent; and they giue light, and regale her, and appeaſe her. And, if ſhe were in ſtate of drynes, and commotion, and diſorder, theſe Words take all away, as if it were, with the hand; yea and yet, much better, then ſo; for it ſeemes, that our Lord's buſines is then, to ſhew his mightie power; and that his Words, are deeds. Me thinkes, there is ſuch a difference, as there is between our ſpeaking, or hearing; neither more, nor leſſe. For, that which I ſpeake, I goe ordering

(as

(as I was saying) with my Vnderstanding; but if another speake to me, I doe no more then heare, without anie trouble at all, to my self. One of these kindes of *VVords*, is like some thing, whereof we cannot well determine, whether it be not, as of a man, who is half asleepe. But this other, is found to come from a voice, so distinct, and cleare, that not one single syllable, of all that, which is sayd, can be lost. And yet, these things happen sometimes, when the Vnderstanding, and, indeed, the whole Soule, is in so great distraction, & disorder, that it would neuer be able, to hitt right, in the framing of one little peice of good discourse; but she findes in this other way, certaine great, and weightie sentences, which are imparted to her, so strangely well ordered, and dressed, that, though she were neuer so deeply recollected, she were not able to reach them; and yet at the verie first word thereof (as I was saying) they beginne to make a totall mutation of her Soule. And especially, if she be brought into Rapt, when the Powers of the Soule, are suspended, how shall those things, euer come to be vnderstood by her, after a naturall way, which were neuer exposed before, to her Memorie; as they come to be then, when it workes not, in effect, at all; and when her Imagination is now, vpon the matter, as it were, all turned foole.

But heer it is to be vnderstood, that whensoeuer either Visions are seen, or anie of these Supernaturall Words, or Speeches, be heard, it is neuer, in

my opinion, at ſuch times, as when the Soule is wholy vnited, in the Rapt it ſelf; for, at thoſe times (as, I thinke, I declared already, in my Diſcourſe of the Second Water) all the Powers of the Minde, are entirely loſt; and ſo we cannot (at ſuch times, as thoſe) either ſee, or heare, or vnderſtand. For, the Soule is wholy in the power of another, at that time, which yet vſes to laſt very little; and, me thinkes, our Lord leaues her not in libertie, to doe anie thing at all. But when that ſhort time is paſt, the Soule remaining ſtill in the Rapt, this happens, whereof now I ſpeake; becauſe the Powers remaine in ſuch ſort, at that time. And though they be not loſt, yet, in effect, they operate, and act nothing at all; but are, as if they were abſorpt, and no way able to diſcourſe, by the aſſembling, and compoſing of reaſons. But there are ſo manie wayes to vnderſtand the differēce, which occurrs heer, between the true, and the falſe, that if the Soule ſhould chance to be deceaued ſome once, ſhe would not be ſo, very often. Nay I ſay further, that if the Soule haue had anie experience, and be carefull to obſerue, what paſſes, ſhe will euidently diſcerne this truth. For, beſides all other meanes, whereby that, will appeare, which I haue ſayd, theſe ſtrained words will worke no effect, at all; neither will the Soule, euer admit them; as yet, ſhe muſt, theſe other true ones, whether ſhe will, or no. Nor giues ſhe anie credit to the thing, at all; but rather findes, and knowes, that it is but a kind of idle imagination; iuſt ſo, in effect, as we would

not

not make account of anie thing, which were sayd to vs, by a frantick person.

But this other, is, as if we heard some person speake, who were very holie, and learned, and of great authoritie; and such an one, as we are sure, would not lye. Yea and this, is but a meane, and base Comparison; because indeed, these verie Words, doe bring with them, sometimes, so great a Maiestie, that euen (without so much as reflecting vpon, who it is, that speakes them) if they be words of reprehension, they make men tremble; and if they concerne the Loue of God, they make Soules euen dissolue, and, as it were, annihilate themselues, in loue. And they are things, in fine, which (as I haue sayd already) are very farre then, from our remembrance; and there vse to be so high, and so great sentences, so clearly, and so suddainly pronounced, as that there would haue been need, of a very great deale of time, for the putting them in order; and, for my part, I thinke, it is wholy impossible, that then, such things as those, should be euen conceiued by vs, to haue been made, or framed, by our selues So that there is no cause at all, why I should detaine my self heerin, anie longer; for it would looke, like a kind of wonder, in mine eye, if anie experienced person should be able to be deceiued heerin, vnlesse he would euen haue a minde, to deceiue himself.

It hath hapned to me, very often, not fully to beleiue that, which *these VVords* tell me, if I be in anie doubt at all thereof; but to conceiue, that it

was no more, then mine owne fancie. This I doe, when the occasion is past; for, at the present, it is impossible; but I haue seen it fulfilled, long after; because our Lord is pleased, that the same should remaine still, in the memorie; for it is not possible, to forget it. Now that, which is wont to proceed from our owne Vnderstanding, is, in effect, but the first motion of our thoughts, which quickly passes away, and is forgotten; whereas this other, is a *VVorke*, rather then a *vvord*. And though some part of it, may be forgotten, in a long tract of time, yet the Memorie cannot loose it, so farre, as not to know, that it was sayd, vnlesse the time may haue been very long; or els, if they be *VVords of Fauour*, or of *Doctrine*, and *Instruction*; but if they be of *Propheſye*, they neuer happen, in my opinion, to be forgotten; at least, this neuer hapned to me, though yet, I haue a very ill memorie.

And now I returne to say, that, me thinkes, if a Soule be not, as it were, so base, and wicked, as euen, in effect, not to be a Soule; and vnlesse it would counterfeit, and feigne (which were mischeif, and miserie enough) and would say, that she vnderstands things, when yet really, there were no such matter, it is impossible but that she should see clearly, that it is she her self, who composes, and frames those Words, and speakes them to her self; especially if she haue had anie vnderstanding at all, of the Spirit of God; for, if she haue not, she may very well remaine in this abuse, or errour, all the dayes of her life; and may perhaps conceiue,

conceiue, that she vnderstands those Words, as spoken by some other; though yet, for my part, I confesse, that I cannot atiue to know, how this should be done; for, either this Soule will vnderstand them, or not. If she be dismissing her self of that, which she vnderstands, and would faine vnderstand no part of it, (for a thousand feares, besides manie other reasons, which she may haue, to continue quiet, in her Prayer, without such accidents, as these) how comes she to allow so much time to the Vnderstanding, as may serue for the composing of these reasons? For, in fine, there must be time, for that. But now, in this other way, we remaine instructed, without anie losse of time, at all; yea, and we grow to vnderstand certaine things, at an instant; when yet otherwise, a moneth would haue been time, little enough, to ordaine them. Yea and the Vnderstanding remaines no lesse then amazed, at some things, which we vnderstand. This is the verie truth; and whosoeuer hath anie experience, will find, that euerie word of this, which I haue sayd, is litterally certaine; and I blesse Almightie God, for enabling me to declare it, as I haue done. And now I end this part of the Discourse, with saying, that me thinkes, when such Words proceed from our owne Vnderstanding, we may easily come to know it, if we haue a minde to it; and euerie time, that we are in Prayer, we shall conceiue, that we vnderstand them. But in this other kind of Words, or Speeches, it is not so; for it will be manie dayes

wherein, though I ſhould deſire to vnderſtand ſomewhat of that kind, it would be abſolutly impoſſible; and when, at other times, I haue no thought that way, I muſt yet vnderſtand it; as I haue ſayd. And me thinkes, that whoſoeuer had a minde to deceiue others, affirming himſelf to vnderſtand that, from Almightie God, which is from himſelf, might as well (and it would coſt him as little) affirme, that he heard it, with his eares. And it is a moſt certaine, and reall truth, that, for my part, I neuer thought, that there was anie other way, then that, for the hearing, and vnderſtanding anie thing, till I found, in mine owne caſe, that this, which I haue now deliuered, is true; and it hath coſt me, as I ſayd, much trouble.

When theſe things proceed of the Diuel, they doe not only, not worke anie good effects, but leaue alſo very ill ones, behind them. But this, hath not hapned to me, aboue twice, or thrice; and I haue inſtantly been aduertiſed, by our Lord, that they were of the Diuel. And, beſides the great dryues, which they leaue behind them, they alſo giue the Soule much diſquiet, after the manner of thoſe manie other times, when our Lord hath permitted me, to haue great temptations, and troubles of Soule, in different kindes; and that I ſhould often be tormented, as I will declare heerafter. But this is a certaine kind of diſquiet, of which we know not, how to vnderſtand, from whence it comes; but it ſeemes, that the Soule reſiſts it, and is put into great diſorder by it; and is afflicted,

without

without knowing for what; in regard that the Diuel ſaith, that ſuch, or ſuch a thing, is not ill, but good. I conceiue, that if one Spirit may be able to find, and feele another, the guſt, and delight, which this Diabolicall Spirit giues, is different, in my opinion, from the other, after a moſt euident manner. The Diuel may well deceiue ſome ſuch perſon, by giuing him guſts, as neuer receiued anie before, from Almightie God; for, theſe latter, are guſts indeed, which import a ſweet, ſtrong, well-imprinted, quiet, delightfull kind of pleaſure, and ioy; for, as for thoſe little prettie deuotions of the Soule, and certaine other ſlight feelings, which be like little young flowers, that are ſhaken off, and loſt, vpon the leaſt little wind of perſecution, I doe not call them Deuotions; though yet they are good beginnings, and holie motions, but no way ſufficient to determine, whether the effects proceed from a good Spirit, or a bad; and therefore it will be very neceſſarie, to walke, in this kind of things, with huge caution; for, ſuch perſons, as ſhall not haue proceeded further, in Prayer, then thus farre, may eaſily grow to be deceiued, if they fall out to haue Viſions, or Reuelations. For my part, I neuer had of theſe laſt, till God, through his owne onlie goodnes, gaue me Prayer of Vnion; vnleſſe it were that firſt time, whereof I ſpoke; and it hapned to me, manie yeares agoe, when I ſaw Chriſt our Lord; and I would to God, it had pleaſed his Diuine Maieſtie, that I had vnderſtood, at that time, that it was a

true Vision, as I vnderstood it, to be, afterward; for it would not haue been, of small aduantage to me.

But now, vpon these illusions of the Diuel, there neuer growes any sweetnes, or softnes, and supplenes, to the Soule: but she remaines, as if she were frighted, and with much disgust. And I hold it for very certaine, that Almightie God will neuer permit the Diuel to deceiue anie Soule, which puts no confidence at all, in her self, and which is fortifyed in the right Faith, and resolues thus much, for her part, that she would dye a thousand deaths, for the least Article thereof; and who, togeather with this Loue, and Faith, being infused into the Soule, by Almightie God (which is a Liuelie, and strong Faith indeed) procures alwayes to goe, in conformitie with that, which is taught by the Holie Catholique Church; informing her selfe further, by seuerall wayes, as a person, who is strongly-seated in this truth, That all the imaginable Reuelations of the whole world, no not, if she should see the verie Heauens open themselues, could make her varie in the least point, from the Doctrines, and Decrees of the sayd Church. But if she once come so farre, as but to shake, or wauer, euen in one single thought, against this; or entertaine her self so farre, as to say: *But nowv, if God himself say thus to me, as he hath sayd such other things, to Saints; this may also be true;* I say not, that she beleiue it, but that the Diuel beginne to tempt her, by this motion; and that she be content, to continue her self a little therein; a

bodie

bodie may see already, that this is starke naught. But for my part, I beleiue, that manie times, euen these other first motions, will hardly euer come so farre, as euen but to set vpon such a Soule; if she be already so strong, as our Blessed Lord is wont to haue made such, as to whome he vses to impart these Fauours. For, me thinkes, she might be able to teare those Diuels, euen to fitters, whensoeuer there might be question of anie one single little Truth, which the Church holds. I say, that, if the Soule doe not find such a strength, as this, in her self; and that the deuotion, or Vision, which she had, doe not assist, and help her-on therein, let her not hold anie such Vision for safe; because, though the hurt of it, be not instantly vnderstood, it may perhaps grow, by little, and little, to be great. For, (to the vttermost of what I can discerne, and know by experience) the reputation, and credit, that such a thing is of the Spirit of God, is setled, and assured, in such sort, as that it also goes, in conformitie to Holie Scripture. And when it should be found to varie from this Rule; though it were neuer so little, I thinke I should be then, much more sure, without comparison, that it were of the Diuel, then now I haue assurance, that it is of Almightie God; how great soeuer I might find that assurance to be. For, in that case, we should haue no need at all, to goe in search after signes; nor to enquire, of what Spirit it were; since this is so cleare a signe, to make vs beleiue, that it is of the Diuel, that if all the world should endeauour

to

to assure me, that it were of God, I would not beleiue it.

The matter is, that, when these things are of the Diuel, it seemes, as if all kind of benediction, did hide it self, and euen flye from the Soule; so vntoward, and vnquiet, and in so great disorder, doth she remaine, without anie one good effect, at all. For, though there may be a seeming, as if there were a planting of good desires, in her; yet they are not effectuall, or strong. The humilitie, which he leaues behind him, is false, vnquiet, and without anie suauitie at all; and me thinkes, this may be easily enough vnderstood, by anie Creature, who hath experience, of what a good Spirit, is. But yet, the Diuel is very able to play manie tricks; and therefore there is nothing of this kind so certaine, and cleare, but that somewhat may still be feared, at his hands. And so it will euer be well done, to proceed with caution, and aduice; and to haue a Directour, who may be learned; and to conceale nothing from him; and so the Party shall be sure to take no hurt; though yet, I haue had my part thereof, through the excessiue feares, to which some of them were subiect.

In particular, it hapned to me once, that manie persons meeting togeather, in whome I had beleife enough, (and there was reason, that I should haue it; and though I proceeded heerin, after the manner of entire confidence, but with one, yet when he commanded me, I spoke also with others)

others) they treated much, about finding remedie, for all my inconueniences. For, they loued me very much; and I doubted, that I might, perhaps, be deceiued; and I was alſo ſubiect to extreame feares, whenſoeuer I was not in Prayer; for when I was, and when our Lord vouchſafed to doe me anie Fauour therein, I grew preſently, into good aſſurance; and I thinke, they were fiue, or ſix of them; and they were all, great Seruants of Almightie God. But then, my Ghoſtlie Father told me, that they * all, had growne to reſolue, that it was the Diuel; and directed me, not to Communicate ſo often; and that I ſhould endeauour, to diuert my ſelf, in ſuch ſort, as that I might not be much alone. Now, I was extreamly timorous in theſe caſes, as I haue ſayd; and the palpitation of my hart, helped me on, therein; ſo that I had not the courage, manie times, to be alone, in my roome, euen by day. But when I found, what ſo manie of them affirmed, (which yet I could by no meanes beleiue) I grew to haue an extreame ſcruple, as conceauing, that this was a ſigne, of very little humilitie, in my ſelf, ſince they all, were incomparably of better life, then I; and, beſides all this, they were learned; and, in fine, why ſhould not I beleiue them? I forced my ſelf the beſt I could, to doe it; and I thought much, of mine owne wicked life; and how, (conſidering that) it might be likely enough to be true, which they ſayd. Vpon this, I went into the Church, with this affliction; and paſſed on,

* *A ſtrange encounter.*

into

into an Oratorie, hauing forborne, manie dayes, to Communicate; and auoided alſo to be alone; which yet had formerly been my totall comfort; and all this, without hauing one perſon, with whome I might treat; for, they were all againſt me. Nay ſome of them, me thought, made themſelues, as it were, merrie with me, whenſoeuer I would be telling them, what I thought; and others would be aduiſing my Ghoſtlie Father, to take heed of me; nay ſome would goe ſo farre, as to ſay, that it was clearly the Diuel. Only my Ghoſtlie Father, though he conformed himſelf with thoſe others (as I grew to vnderſtand afterward) ſo farre, as to haue me tryed, did euer giue me comfort, and told me, that, though it ſhould be the Diuel, yet I, not offending Almightie God, he would be able to doe me no hurt; That the difficultie would grow to be remoued; That, in the meane time, I ſhould pray hartily to Almightie God; and that he, and all thoſe others, and manie more alſo then they, would doe the like; and all my Prayer, and theirs, whome I conceiued to be the Seruants of Almightie God, aymed at this; That his Diuine Maieſtie would be pleaſed, to carrie me on, by ſome other way. And this kind of making continuall interceſſion to our Lord, might laſt, about a matter of ſome two yeares.

As for me, I was capable of no comfort, when I thought once, that it was poſſible, for the Diuel, to be ſo often ſpeaking to me, and in me; but in regard, that now, I employed no more howers

of

of my time, in Solitude, for Prayer, our Lord gaue me Recollection, euen when I was in conuerſation; and ſo, as that I was not able to auoyd it; and he ſayd ſuch things to me, as he pleaſed; and I, in the meane time, was troubled, that I was faine to heare him. But once, being all alone, without hauing anie Creature by me, vpon whome to eaſe my ſelf, I could neither pray, nor reade; but was like a perſon, euen all amazed, at ſo great tribulation, as I endured; and with ſo much feare, to conſider, whether the Diuel were to haue power, to circumuent me, in this manner, or no. And being all diſordered, and euen tyred, without knowing what to doe with my ſelf (for I had ſeen my ſelf, in this affliction, and that very often, though yet neuer, to my thinking, in ſo great extremitie, as then) I remained foure, or fiue howers, after this manner? For there ſeemed to be no comfort at all, for me, either vpon earth, or yet from Heauē; but our Lord left me ſo, in ſufferāce, and vnder the feare alſo, of a thouſand dangers.

O my deare Lord! and how truly art thou a true friend? and how powerfull art thou, to doe what thou wilt? and doſt neuer leaue, to loue them, who loue thee, if they loue thee indeed? Let all things praiſe thee, O thou Lord of the whole world; and O, that I could cry out, lowd enough, through that whole world, to declare, how faithfull, and true thou art, to thy freinds! All other things grow to faile vs; but thou, who art the Lord of them all, doſt neuer faile; and it is little

little alſo, which thou permitteſt ſuch, as loue thee, to ſuffer for thee. O my deare Lord! how delicately, and how ſmoothly, yea and how ſauourily alſo, doſt thou know, how to treat ſuch Soules! O that a Creature, whome I know, had been ſo happie, as neuer to haue detained her ſelf, vpon louing anie other thing, then thee! It ſeemes indeed, O Lord, that ſometimes, thou tryeſt ſuch, as loue thee, with a kind of rigour; to the end, that, by that extremitie of trouble, they may afterward, come the better, to find, and feele thereby, the great exceſse of thy loue. O my God! that I had vnderſtanding, and learning, yea and new words; ſo to be able, to exaggerate thy workes, according to that intelligence, which my Soule hath, thereof! All this, is wanting to me, O my deare Lord; but yet, if thou forſake me not, I will neuer be wanting to thee. Let all the learned men of the world riſe-vp againſt me; Let the Diuells of Hell, torment me; yea, Let all creatures perſecute me; but only, be not thou wanting to me, O my deare Lord; for I know, by good experience, with how much aduantage, and fruit, thou deliuereſt all ſuch perſons, as put their confidence in thee, alone. For, when I was in this great, and miſerable affliction of Spirit, at a time, when I had not enioyed anie one Viſion, at all, theſe only few * following words, were ſufficient to free me from all trouble, and to quiet me entirely: *Feare not, O my Daughter; for, it is I; and I will not forſake thee; Doe not feare.* It ſeemes to me, that, conſidering what

**Great powuer of our Lord.*

what kind of Creature I was, then, there would haue been need of a long time, to perſwade me to quiet my ſelf; and that no bodie would haue been able, to doe it; and yet now, behold me heer, all quieted, and compoſed, by theſe few words; and I was endued with ſtrength, with courage, & with ſecuritie, which was accompanied with a kind of repoſe, and light; in ſuch ſort, as that, at that verie inſtant, I ſaw my Soule become a direct other thing, then it was before; and, me thinkes, I could euen haue diſputed againſt the whole world, in proofe, that this, proceeded from Almightie God. O what a good deare God, is this! O what a good deare Lord is he, and how very powerfull! for not only doth he giue the counſaile, but the remedie alſo. His verie Words, are Workes; and O, how doth he, both ſtrengthen our Faith, and encreaſe our Loue? It is really very true, that I often called to minde, how our Lord had commanded the windes, to compoſe, and quiet themſelues, at Sea, when a Tempeſt had been raiſed. And ſo alſo, did I ſay: Who is this, whome all the Powers of my Soule obey? and who, at an inſtant, brings-in light, to chace ſo great an obſcuritie away; and makes that hart, grow ſoft, and ſupple, which ſeemed to haue the verie hardnes of ſtone; and knowes, how to driue, and draw-downe the water of ſweet teares, where there was ſo great a drougth, ſo long before. Who is he, that can inſpire theſe deſires? Who can imprint ſuch a courage? what was I

about, to doubt? and what can I feare? What is this? I desire, to serue this Lord; and I pretend no other thing, then to please him; I renounce all contentment, and ease, or anie other good at all, but only the accomplishing of his Will. For, of this, I was very sure, in my opinion; and that I might safely affirme it; that, since this Lord is so powerfull, as, I see, he is; and as I know, he is; and that all the Diuels of Hell, are his Slaues; and of this, there can be no doubt, since it is matter of Faith; and I being the Seruant of this Lord, and King, what hurt can they all, be able to doe me? and, why may not I haue strength enough, to fight with all the Powers of Hell?

I then, tooke a Crosse into my hand; and really, I thought, God gaue me courage to conceiue, that I should be shortly, another kinde of woeman; and that I was not to be afrayd, to wrestle a Fall, with the * Diuels; but conceiued, that, togeather with that Crosse, I should be easily able, to ouercome them all; yea and once, I prouoked them thus: Come towards me, as manie of you, as dare; for I, being the Seruant of our Lord, will see, what you all, can doe against me. And it is most certaine, that I thought, they were afrayd of me; and, for my part, I remained so, in quiet, and so totally, without feare of them all, that all the feares, which I had formerly conceiued, till that verie present time, were remoued from me. For, though I saw them sometimes, (as I shall declare afterward) yet I neuer feared them more,

** How quickly she gott courage against the Diuells.*

more, but conceiued that they were rather affrayd of me. I poſſeſſed a dominion ouer them, which had been giuen me, by the Lord of all Creatures; and I make no more reckoning of them, then of ſo manie Flyes; and they ſeem to be, of ſo cowardlie a nature, that, when once they come to find, that they are not eſteemed, they haue no power at all. For, this kind of enemie, knowes not, how to ſet vpon anie one, who renders not himſelf vp, to them; or els; when Almightie God permitts, for the greater good of his Seruants, that they may tempt, and torment them. I would to God, it might pleaſe his Diuine Maieſtie, that we would feare, whome indeed, we ought to feare; and that we might perfectly vnderſtand, that we ſhall receiue more preiudice, by committing anie * one ſingle Veniall ſinne, then by all the power of Hell, put togeather; for, this is a moſt certaine truth. How extreamly doe theſe Diuels carrie vs frighted, vp, and downe, becauſe our ſelues indeed, will needs giue occaſion thereof, by our being ſo cloſe faſtned, as we are, to our Honours, to our Eſtates, and to our Delights? For then, we being ioyned togeather, with theſe impediments, by louing, and deſiring to poſſeſſe them, who are our contraries, & whome we ought to abhorre, they grow able, to doe vs much hurt. For, we enable them, to fight againſt our verie ſelues, with our owne weapons, which we put into their hands; though indeed, we were to defend our ſelues, thereby, againſt them; And

* *A moſt certaine truth.*

this is both pitty, and shame. But now, if, on the other side, we shall resolue to abhorre all those things, for the loue of our Lord, and embrace his Crosse, and pitch vpon doing him seruice, in good earnest, he flyes as fast away from these solid truths, as a man would doe, from the Plague. In fine, he is a freind of Lyes; yea and a verie Lye, himself. He is easily kept from medling much, with such persons as walke entirely according to Truth; but when once he can discouer, that a mans Vnderstanding growes to be obscured, he hath a particular grace, in procuring to breake the verie strings of his eyes; and if he see one, already proue so blind, as that he will needs build his rest, and ease, vpon vaine things, (and so vaine, as that, being things of this world, they are no better, then toyes, fitt for children) he findes already, that such a person, is a verie Child, and so he treates him like such an one; and wrestles with him, more or lesse, as he sees cause.

I beseech our Blessed Lord, that I may neuer proue to be one of these, but that his Diuine Maiestie, may be pleased to doe me so much Fauour, as that I may vnderstand that, to be ease, and rest, which is, indeed, true ease, and rest; and that, to be honour; which is true Honour; & delight, which is true delight; and not the direct contrarie, to all this; and then, a figg for all the Diuels in Hell; for then, they shall be, all of them, afrayd of me. For my part, I vnderstād not those feares of the Diuel, and the Diuel; and I know not what; when we

may

may be able to say, God, and God, &c. and so make those Wretches, tremble. For already, we know well enough, that the Diuel is not able to stirre, vnlesse our Lord permit him. What then, may be the ground of all these disorders? It is certainly, that I am more afrayd of them, who are so frighted by the Diuel, then of the Diuel himself; for he is vtterly vnable, to doe me hurt, whereas these others (especially, if they be Ghostlie Fathers) may put Soules to much disquiet; and, for my part, I haue passed some yeares, through so great trouble, that now, I am euen amazed to consider, how I haue been able to endure it. But Blessed be our Lord, who hath assisted me, in so good earnest; Amen.

THE SIX AND TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

She prosecutes the same Discourse; and goes relating, and declaring such things, as hapned to her, vvhich made her loose feare; and to be strengthned in a beleif, that it vvas a good Spirit, vvhich spake to her.

I Esteem the courage, which our Lord hath vouchsafed to giue me, against all the Diuels of Hell, to be one of the great Fauours, which it hath pleased his Diuine Maiestie, to doe mee; since for a Soule to goe cowardly on, and to be fearefull indeed, of anie thing,

but only to offend the Maieſtie of Almightie God, is an extreame inconuenience. For, ſince we haue a King, who is Omnipotent, and ſo great a Lord, that he can doe, what he liſtes, and who brings all things into ſubiection, vnder himſelf, there is no feare at all, to be had; and therefore, as I was ſaying, we haue no cauſe to doubt; ſo that we walke ſincerely, and with puritie of conſcience, in the preſence of his Diuine Maieſtie. And in order to this end, I ſhall be glad, to haue all the feares in the world, to offend him, in anie one inſtant of my whole life; who is able in the verie ſelf-ſame inſtant, to deſtroy, and annihilate vs all. As long as his Diuine Maieſtie is pleaſed with vs, there is no Creature, who can ſtand againſt vs, without hauing his head broken, for his paines. You will, peraduenture, ſay, that this is very true; but yet now, on the other ſide, where ſhall we find that Soule, which ſtands ſo ſtreight, as that ſhe may be wholy pleaſing to him? and becauſe ſhe is not ſo, ſhe is in feare. I anſwer, that I am ſure, that, that pure, and innocent Soule, is none of mine, which indeed is very wretched, and vnprofitable, and ſurcharged euen with a thouſand miſeries. But yet ſtill, we haue this comfort, that Almightie God doth not proceed with ſuch rigours, as men doe; for he knowes, and conſiders our frailties; and the Soule hath wayes of vnderſtanding, and finding in it ſelf, by great coniectures, whether, really, ſhe loue his Diuine Maieſtie, or no; for in ſuch, as ariue once to this ſtate,

our

our loue to him,is not now;a kind of diſſembled, or diſguiſed loue, as it vſes ſometimes to be,in the beginnings; but it is accompanied with ſo great impulſes, and euen impetuoſities of deſire, to ſee Almightie God, as I ſhall afterward declare; or rather, as I haue declared already; and all things are wont to afflict; all things to wearie, & tyre; and all things doe euen torment her,vnleſſe it be only God, or for God. There is not ſo much, as anie repoſe,which doth not diſpleaſe her; becauſe ſhe findes her ſelf abſent, from her true repoſe; and ſo it falls-out to be very euident, that things paſſe not heer, in a diſſembling way.

It hath hapned to me, in former times, that I found my ſelf, in great tribulations; and I was ſubiect to manie detractions, (by occaſion of a certaine buſines, whereof I may haue cauſe to ſpeake afterward) from all that Houſe, where I liue,yea and from my Order;and I was afflicted, vpon manie accidents, which occurred then; at which time, it pleaſed our Lord, to vtter theſe expreſſe words to me: *Of vvhat art thou afrayd? Doſt thou not knovv, that I am Omnipotent? I vvill accomplish all that, vvhich I haue promiſed thee.* And indeed, he accompliſhed it afterwards, very well. But euen inſtantly, there remained ſuch a kind of ſtrength in me,that,me thought, I could preſently haue put my ſelf, to aduenture vpon other things, though they ſhould coſt me much more trouble, for the doing him ſeruice; and could haue ſuffered alſo much more, for him. And this

verie ſelf ſame thing, hath hapned to me ſo often, that I am not able to count the times; and he hath made me, and makes me ſtill, ſuch reprehenſions (by occaſion of thoſe imperfections, which I commit ſometimes) that they are able, euen, as it were, to annihilate the Soule. At leaſt, they bring ſo much in their company, as that ſhe is mended by them; for, his Diuine Maieſtie (as I haue ſayd) doth not only giue vs the counſaile, but the remedie. At other times, he brings back to me, the memorie of the Sinnes of my former life; and this, he moſt ordinarily vſes to doe, whenſoeuer he intends, to vouchſafe me anie extraordinarie Fauour. And he doth it in ſuch ſort, that the Soule diſcernes her ſelf, as if ſhe were really planted, at the verie Day of the Laſt Vniuerſall Iudgement; and the truth is repreſented to her, with ſuch a kind of perſpicuitie, and claritie, that ſhe knowes not, what to doe with her ſelf. At other times, he is pleaſed to informe me of certaine dangers, concerning both my ſelf, and others, about things, which doe not happen, till three, or fowre yeares, after; but they all, were euer fulfilled; and ſome of them, might alſo be named, if there were cauſe. So that, there are ſo manie particulars, whereby it may be vnderſtood, that theſe things are of Almightie God, as that, in my opinion, they cannot but be knowne, and acknowledged. The moſt ſecure proceeding conſiſts, in that, ſuch a perſon doe not faile, to impart her whole Soule, to her Ghoſtlie Father;

and

and that he be a learned man; and that she doe entirely obey him. At least, this is the course, which I take; and without this, I could haue no rest; nor were it indeed fitt, that we woemen, should haue anie; since we haue no learning; and there can be no hurt at all, in this, but manie aduantages, and benefits; as our Lord himself hath told me, manie times; I say, manie times.

I had once a Ghostlie Father, who mortifyed me very much; and sometimes, he did euen afflict me; and brought me a great deale of trouble; and disquieted me, in extraordinarie manner; and yet it was he, who, in my opinion, did me the most good, of them all. And though I loued him very much, yet I had some temptations, to leaue him; for it seemed to me, that I was much preiudiced, by those inconueniences which he was wont to giue me concerning my Prayer. But yet euer, when I was determining to doe this, I instantly vnderstood, that I was to forbeare it; and I receiued such a reprehension from our Lord, as defeated, and, as it were annihilated, me more, then all that, which my Ghostlie Father, could lay vpon me. And sometimes, he tired me outright, with asking me questions, on the one side, and making me some reproofe, on the other; and I had need of no lesse, then all this; so double, and so weake a will I had. He told me once, that it was not to obey, if withall, I were not resolued to suffer; and that I was to cast mine eyes, vpon what he had been content to endure for me; and that so,

the hardeſt things, would become eaſie.

Another Ghoſtlie Father of mine, to whome I was wont to Confeſſe my ſelf, in the beginnings, gaue me once this aduiſe, that, ſince it had been found by tryall, that the Spirit was good, I ſhould now carrie things, in abſolute ſilence; and not giue notice thereof, to anie Creature; for that it was better, to wrap-vp theſe kindes of things in that manner. As for me, I miſliked not this; for, whenſoeuer I was to declare them to my Ghoſtlie Father, I grew to be ſo much troubled, and conceiued my ſelf to be ſo much affronted by it, that I had much leſſe difficultie, to Confeſſe my greateſt Sinnes. And eſpecially, if I were to declare thoſe higheſt Fauours, which our Lord vouchſafed to impart, I thought, they were not likelie to beleiue it, but to make a ieaſt, and ſcorne of me. But indeed, I was cheifly troubled ſo much at it, becauſe it ſeemed to amount to a kind of irreuerence, towards the wonders of Almightie God; and for this reaſon, I would haue been glad, to conceale them. But I quickly came to vnderſtand, how that Ghoſtlie Father had giuen me * very ill aduiſe; and that I was, by no meanes, to conceale anie thing, from him, who was to receiue my Confeſſions; becauſe there was much ſecuritie for me, to deale clearly with him; and that, if I proceeded otherwiſe, I might perhaps fall into errour, at one time, or other. Whenſoeuer our Lord commanded me anie thing, in my Prayer, if my Ghoſtlie Father chanced to bid me doe other-

** This was a very ill aduiſe indeed.*

otherwise, our Lord would returne to command me, to obey my Ghostlie Father; and yet againe afterward, his Diuine Maiestie, would direct him, to command me, to doe that verie thing, which our Lord himself had commanded me to doe, before.

When once they tooke manie Bookes, written in Spanish, from me, that I might not reade them, I was much troubled at it; for, some of them, serued me for recreation; and now I was not able to reade them, because there were none left there, but in Latin. But then, our Blessed Lord sayd these words to me: *Be not troubled; for I vvill giue thee a Liuing Booke.* I could not, for my part, vnderstand, why this had been sayd to me; for then, I had neuer had Vision; but within a little while after, I vnderstood it very well; for I haue had so much to thinke of, and to recollect my self about, concerning those things, which I saw before me, and our Blessed Lord hath shewed me so great loue, as to instruct me, by such a multitude of wayes, that I haue had very little need of Bookes, or rather, in effect, none at all; for, his Diuine Maiestie, hath been that true Booke to me, wherein I haue, indeed, seen Truths. And now, blessed be such a Booke, as this, which leaues that, imprinted in the verie hart, which is to be read; yea and so, as that it can neuer be forgotten. Who can euer, see our Blessed Lord, all couered-ouer with wounds, and afflicted with persecutions of all kindes, and yet, not be contented,

ted, to embrace them; yea and to desire them, and to loue them? Who can see, though but a very little, of that Glorie, which he giues to such, as serue him, and not come instantly to know, that all that, which we can possibly euer, either doe, or suffer heer, is directly nothing; since we hope for so high a reward? He, who sees the torments, which the damned Soules of Hell, endure, how can he choose, but esteem all the torments of this life, to be a kind of delightfull thing, in comparison of those others? and how can he choose but know the mightie obligation, which he hath to our Blessed Lord, for hauing deliuered him, so often, out of that sad place.

But because I meane heerafter, by the Fauour of Almightie God, to speake more of some particular things of these kinds, I now intend to declare, the processe of mine owne Life; and for the present, I beseech Almightie God, that I may haue knowne, how to expresse my self in that, which I haue sayd already. I well beleiue, that whosoeuer shall haue had experience, will haue vnderstood me; and will haue seen, that I haue hapned vpon saying somewhat, which is to the purpose; but I shall not wonder a whitt, if such, as haue none, shall conceiue, that I haue been talking idly, all this while. It suffices me, to say, as I haue sayd, that so I may remaine free, from fault; nor yet, will I blame anie other, who shall be of a different opinion. Our blessed Lord giue me grace, that I may neuer faile, in fulfilling his holie will, Amen.

THE

THE SEAVEN AND TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

She treats of another vvay, hovv our Lord inſtructs a Soule and giues her to vnderſtand his VVill, after a very admirable manner, vvithout anie ſpeech at all. She alſo declares a certaine Viſion, and great Fauour, vvhich our Lord shevved her; and this Viſion, vvas not Imaginarie. This Chapter is very much to be noted.

BVt now, (returning to the Diſcourſe, or Hiſtoricall part of my Life) I remained with much affliction, and trouble, but it was accompanied with manie prayers (as I was ſaying) which were made to our Lord, that he would be pleaſed, to conduct my Soule, by ſome other way, which might be more ſecure; ſince they told me, that the former, was, to be ſuſpected. Yet, true it is, that, howſoeuer I begged it much, of Almightie God, yet conſidering, how euidently my Soule was improued, by the courſe which I held before, I could neuer find it in my power, to deſire it hartily, and home, (though yet ſtill, I did it, in ſome ſort) vnleſſe it were ſometimes, when I was euen diſtreſſed, and all tyred out, by the things, which they ſayd to me; and by the frights, into which they put me. For now, I was wholy growne, to be another

another Creature; and therefore, I could not cordially desire it. Only I put my self into the hands of Almightie God, beseeching him, that since he knew, what was fittest for me, he would be pleased, to accomplish his holie Will, in all things, concerning me. But now, I saw plainly, that, by this way of mine, which they suspected, my Soule was euen carrying-vp to Heauen, which formerly was dropping downe to Hell; And why therefore, should I desire, that this course might be changed? For, as for beleiuing, that it was of the Diuel, it was not in my power, euen to constraine my self to it; though yet, I did what I could, to desire, that I might be able to beleiue it; but it was not (as I sayd) in my power. I offered, to this end, some little, poore, good workes, which I did, if I did anie. I became deuoted to some Saints; to the end, that, by their meanes, I might be deliuered from the Diuel. I performed the Deuotions of Nine Dayes; I recōmended my self to S Hilarion, and to S. Michael also, the Archangell, for I had lately applyed my self to him, for this purpose; and I importuned also manie other Saints, that our Lord might be pleased, by their intercession, to conduct me, in the way of Truth; I say, that they would find some meanes, to perfect this busines of mine, with his Diuine Maiestie. In fine, after the end of two yeares, which, both I, and other persons, had wholy employed, with all their prayers, and mine, in order to this end, that our Lord might be pleased, either to conduct my Soule

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by ſome other way, or els vouchſafe to declare, that this way, wherein I went, was right, (for now, thoſe *VVords*, and *Speeches*, which I haue related, that our Lord would be vttering to me ſometimes, were growne very ordinarie, & euen continuall) that chanced, and occurred to me, which I will now declare.

As I was in Prayer, one day (and it was vpon the Feſtiuitie of the Glorious S.Peter) I ſaw, ſtanding very neer me, or rather, (to ſay better) mee thought I felt (for indeed I ſaw nothing at all, with the eyes, either of my Bodie, or of my Minde) that Chriſt our Lord was cloſe by me; and I found, in fine, that it was he, in my opinion, who was ſpeaking to me. But now I (who was extreamly ignorant, till then, that there might be anie ſuch thing, in the world, as ſuch a Viſion) fell, at the firſt, into a mightie feare; and I could doe nothing but weepe; though yet, through his giuing me aſſurance, by his ſpeaking but one onlie word, I found my ſelf, as I had formerly been, not only without feare, and very quiet, but euen with Regalo, and delight. Me thought, that Chriſt Ieſus, our Lord, went euer cloſe to me, on one ſide; but the Viſion not being Imaginarie, or repreſented in any Forme, I perceiued not, in what ſhape he was. But as for his being euer, on my right ſide, I found, and felt that, very clearly; and that he was the witnes, of whatſoeuer I did; and that I could not be recollected, though it were neuer ſo little, (or rather indeed, vnleſſe I were much

much diuerted,or diſtracted) but I muſt needs, in fine,vnderſtand,that he was very neer me. I then went immediatly to my Ghoſtlie Father, being ſufficiently vexed,and greiued, that I muſt let him know it. He asked me,what Forme, or Figure he had,when I ſaw him; and I told him, that I had not ſeen him. Vpon this,he enquired then, how I knew, that it was Chriſt our Lord. To this I anſwered, that I knew no more, but that I could not poſſibly faile, or forbeare, to vnderſtand,and know, that he was cloſe to me;and that I found, and felt it plainly; and that now,the recollection of my Soule,in Prayer of Quiet,was farre greater, and more continuall; & that the effects were very different from thoſe others,which I had formerly found; and that the thing was very certaine, and cleare.For my part,I could doe no more,but bring diuerſe Compariſons, whereby to giue my ſelf to be vnderſtood;but yet certainly,in my opinion, there is none, which can ſuite very well, to expreſſe this kind of Viſion. For,as this is one of the higheſt kind (as I was told afterwards, by a certaine holie man, and of great Spirit, called *Fray Pedro de Alcantara*, whome I ſhall mention afterward, more at large; (and the ſame hath been alſo told me,by other great learned men) and that this, is one of thoſe Fauours, where the Diuel can leaſt intermeddle,or intrude himſelf,of all others) ſo haue we heer no words, or tearmes at all, wherewith to declare it;at leaſt we,who know ſo little;though ſuch as are learned,will,peraduēture,

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be able to doe it better. For, when I say, that I neither saw this, with the eyes of the Bodie, nor of the Minde (because it was no Imaginarie Vision) how come I to vnderstand, and how can I vndertake, and affirme, more clearly, & certainly, that Christ our Lord was standing neer me, then if I had seen him, with my verie eyes. For it seemes indeed to be; as if a person were in the darke, who sees not another, that stands by him; or as if the same person were blind. Some resemblance, I say, this carries; though yet, not very much. For in this last case, a man may come to know it, by the way of senetall Senses; because he may heare the other speake, or stirre; or he may touch him; But heer, there is nothing of all this; nor is there heer, anie darknes at all; but only the thing is represented to the Soule, by a certaine notice, which is more cleare then the Sunne. I say not, that anie Sunne is seen, not anie clearnes, or brightnes at all; but only a certaine light, which illuminates, and informes the Vnderstanding (though yet without seing anie light) to the end, that the Soule may enioy so high a good. Now, this brings great benefits with it. Yet is it not like such a Presence of God, as manie times is felt in the Minde; and especially by such persons, as be ariued to Vnion, and Quiet Prayer; who, in resoluing to beginne to make that Prayer, seem to find the person readie at hand, to whome to speake; and we seem to vnderstand, that he heares vs; by the effects, and spirituall feelings, which we find, of great Loue,

and Faith, and other firme purpoſes, and reſolutions, accompanied with much tendernes of Deuotions. This is a great Fauour of Almightie God; and let him eſteem it much, who hath it; for it is a very eleuated, and high Prayer; but yet, it is no Viſion; but heer it is vnderſtood, that Almightie God is there, by the effects; which, as I haue ſayd, he workes in the Soule; for, in this manner of Prayer, doth his Diuine Maieſtie vouchſafe, to giue himſelf, then, and there, to be felt. But now, heer, it is clearly found, that *Chriſt Ieſus* the Sonne of the *Virgin*, is preſent. In that other manner of Prayer, there are certaine influences of the Diuinitie repreſented; but heer, togeather with them, we find, that the moſt Sacred Humanitie alſo of Chriſt our Lord, doth accompanie vs, to doe vs fauour. My Ghoſtlie Father then asked me this queſtion: *VVho told you, that it vvas Ieſus Chriſt*: Himſelf told me ſo, (anſwered I) and that manie times; but yet, euen before he told me ſo, it was imprinted vpon my Vnderſtanding, that it was he; yea and euen before this, he told me ſo; and yet ſtill I ſaw him not. If anie man, whome I had neuer ſeen, but only had heard newes of him, ſhould come to ſpeake with me (I being either blind, or in the darke) and ſhould tell me, who he were, I ſhould beleiue him; and yet I could not ſo reſolutly affirme him, to be that perſon, as if I had ſeen him. But yet now, in this other caſe, I could; for heer, there is imprinted, ſo cleare a notice of him, in the Minde, without

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seeing him, that it seemes a kind of impossibilitie, to doubt it; for, our Lord will haue it so engrauen vpon the Vnderstanding, that it can no more be questioned, then euen that, which we see; no nor yet so much; for, in things, which we see, there remaines, sometimes, a suspicion, whether we might not haue fancied such a thing, and so mistaken it. But heer, though vpon the suddaine, and, as it were, by way of surprise, one may beginne to fall vpon a kind of suspicion, or doubt, yet still, vpon the whole matter, we remaine in so great a certaintie, as that the doubt continues not, to haue place. And so also, doth it fall out; though yet, in a different manner, that God instructs the Soule, & speakes to it, but yet without speaking at all, in such sort, as I haue already declared.

This is a certaine kind of language, which hath so much of the Celestiall in it, that it cannot well be giuen to be vnderstood by vs heer, how much soeuer we may desire it, vnlesse our Lord himself be pleased to teach it, by experience. For, our Blessed Lord conueyes, and places that, in the most interiour part of the Soule, which he is pleased, that the same Soule shall vnderstand, and know; and there, doth he represent it, without either anie image of his person, or anie forme of words; but only after the way of that kind of Vision, which I haue already touched. And now, let this manner of Almightie God's making the Soule vnderstād, what he will, in the way of great Truths, and mysteries, be much obserued. For,

manie times, that, which I vnderstand, when our Lord declares anie Vision; which his Diuine Maiestie is pleased to represent to me, is after this manner; and me thinkes, it is in such occasions, as where the Diuel is least able to intermeddle, or intrude himself, for these reasons; and if they be not found, I am likelie enough, to be deceiued. Now this kind of Vision, and language, is so inwardly a thing of Spirit, that heer, there is no kind of springing, or euen stirring, in anie of the Powers of the Minde; nor yet in anie of the Senses of the Bodie, in my opinion; by which meanes, the Diuel may be able to make himself the gainer. Thus, I say, it happens sometimes; as namely, when it lasts but a very little while. For, at some other times, me thinkes, that neither the Powers of the Minde, are suspended, nor yet the Senses of the Bodie disabled, but that they are all, at home, and in vse. The other, happens not alwayes in this degree of Contemplation, but rather very seldome. I say, that, when they are so loft, we neither operate anie thing, nor doe anie thing; but all seemes, to be the worke of our Lord. It is, as when a food is already conueyd into the stomack, without either our hauing eaten it, or so much as knowing, who layd it there; but only we vnderstand well, that there it is; though, in that case, it be neither knowne, what the food is, nor who carried it thither. But heer, it is very differet; for here, the food is knowne, though yet, how it got thither, I cannot tell; for neither did I see it, nor vnderstand it; nor was I euer moued,

moued to desire it; nor had it euer come to my knowledge before, that such a thing, could possibly be.

In the *Speech*, vpon which I touched before, Almightie God makes the Vnderstanding obserue, and reflect, vpon that, which is sayd; whether it desire to vnderstand, or no. For there; it seemes, that the Soule hath some other kind of eares, wherewith to heare; & that he makes her harken, and not, the while, to thinke of somewhat els; as if one, who could heare well, were not suffered, to stopp his eares; and that they cryed out alowd, to him, who would therefore be faine to heare them, whether he would, or no; but somewhat, in fine, he doth, since he is attentiue to vnderstand, what they say. But heer, the Soule doth iust nothing; for, euen that little, which was done in the former way, and which was only to harken, is taken from her now; for now, she findes all dressed, to her hand; yea and all eaten by her, too. So that now, there is nothing to be done by her, but to enioy. Iust so, as anie one, who, without euer hauing learnt, or so much as endeauoured to read, and much more, without anie studying at all, should find that whole Science already possessed by himself, and that, without knowing at all, either how, or whence it came, since he had neuer procured to acquire it, with so much, as learning his A.B C. And this last Comparison, me thinkes, declares some part of this Celestiall guift; for, the Soule findes her self heer, to be growne

wise, vpon a ſuddaine; and that the Myſterie of the moſt Holie Trinitie, and other moſt ſublime Articles, are ſo exactly declared to her, that there is not anie Theologue, or Diuine, in the world, with whome ſhe might not aduenture to diſpute, concerning the truth of thoſe high points.

The Soule remaines heer, in ſuch an amazement, that ſome one ſuch Fauour, as this, ſuffices, to worke a totall change in her; and to make her loue nothing, but only him, who, without anie labour at all, of hers, hath made her capable of ſo vnſpeakable bleſſings; and to whome he communicates his ſecrets; and whome he treats with arguments of ſo great, and deare freindſhip, and loue, that they * endure not, ſo much, as to be written. For he doth ſome ſuch kinds of Fauour, as might euen beſpeake a kind of ſuſpicion, and doubt, in the hearer; in regard, that they are of ſo great admiration; and haue been imparted to a perſon, who hath deſerued them ſo very ill. And, in fine, if we bring not a very Liuelie, and euen luſty Faith with vs, they cannot be beleiued; and therefore I reſolue, to ſpeake of few of thoſe, which our Lord hath been pleaſed to vouchſafe me, vnleſſe I be expreſly commanded; and vnleſſe it be of ſome few Viſions, which perhaps, may ſerue, to doe good, in ſome kind: To the end, that anie ſuch perſons, as to whome our Lord may be pleaſed to impart the like, may not wonder, and thinke it impoſſible, as I did; or els, that ſo, I may declare the manner, and way, by which it hath pleaſed

The incredible deare ſweetnes of our B. Lord to a Soule.

pleaſed our Lord, to conduct my Soule; that being the verie thing, which they haue commanded me to write.

Returning therefore now, to this manner of vnderſtanding theſe kinds of things; me thinkes, our Lord is pleaſed, that, by all meanes, this Soule of ours, ſhould haue ſome notice heer, euen of that, which paſſes in Heauen; and that, as Soules doe there vnderſtand one another, really, without ſpeaking, (which, for my part, I neuer knew before, (and this is moſt certainly true) till our Lord, through his goodnes, made me ſee it, and ſhewed it me, in a certaine Rapt of mine) So alſo ſhould it be heer, in this world; and that ſo, Almightie God, and the Soule, might be able to vnderſtand one another; and that, vpon this ſole cauſe, and reaſon, in regard that his Diuine Maieſtie is pleaſed, that they ſhall doe ſo, without anie other artifice, or meanes; that ſo, the mutuall loue, which theſe two deare freinds carrie to one another, may be giuen by them, to be mutually vnderſtood. Iuſt ſo, as in this world, when two perſons loue one another very dearly, and be endued with a good vnderſtanding, and witt, they ſeem able to vnderſtand themſelues together; euen without, ſo much as ſignes; and by only, looking well, vpon one another. Thus ought it to be, in our caſe, ſince, (without our knowing expreſly, how) theſe two Louers looke earneſtly, vpon one another, in the face; as the Spouſe ſaith to his Beloued, in the Canticles; for ſo, I thinke,

I haue heard, that it is expreſſed there.

O admirable benignitie of thee, O Lord, who permitteſt thy ſelf, to be looked vpon, by thoſe eyes, which haue abuſed their ſight, ſo much, as theſe of my Soule, haue done! At leaſt, O my deare Lord, let them now, be accuſtomed (after this ſight of thee) to looke no more, vpon anie inferiour, and baſe Obiects; nor let anie thing be able, to pleaſe them, out of thee. O great ingratitude of mortall Creatures! how farre, wilt thou be able, to ariue? For now I know, euen by experience, that this is litterally true, which I am saying, That, whatſoeuer is poſſibly able to be expreſſed by me, is no more, then the verie leaſt part of that Fauour, which thou imparteſt to anie ſuch Soule, as thou vouchſafeſt to bring to ſuch a State, as this. O Soules, which haue begunne to vſe Prayer; and you, who haue really Faith, and firme Beleif; what bleſſings, and benefits are you poſſibly able to ſeeke, and get, which may, anie way, be compared, euen to the leaſt of thoſe, which are obtained, by the Seruants of Almightie God, euen in this mortall life of ours? And conſider, (for it is moſt certainly true) that Almightie God imparts himſelf thus, euen heer, to ſuch, * as forſake all things, for loue of him. For, he is no accepter of perſons, and he loues all men; nor hath anie one of them anie excuſe, how wicked ſoeuer he may haue been; ſince our Lord hath proceeded, after this manner, euen with me; and aduanced me to ſuch a condition, as you ſee. Conſider alſo, that

* *Obſerue this, wvell.*

that this, which I am saying now, is not so much as a little Cipher of that, which were to be sayd; but, only so much is heer deliuered, as is necessarie, for the giuing this manner of Vision, and Fauour; which Almightie God, is pleased to doe to a Soule, to be, in some sort, vnderstood.

But now, it is in no power of mine, to declare that, which she findes, and feeles, when our Lord is pleased, to impart those secrets, and greatnesses of his; togeather with that delight, which is so highly superiour to all those others, which can possibly be imparted by this world; and that they doe, with a mightie deale of reason, make them, who possesse the same, euen abhorre all the pleasures of the earth; which, when they be all, clapt togeather, are no better, then meer dung, and durt; nay it is, after a sort, euen to giue one a Vomit, to bring these, into anie comparison at all, with those others; euen though they should be able to last for euer. And yet, of these Celestiall ioyes, what kind of poore proportion of them, is that, which he is pleased, to impart, in this world? No more, then, as it were, one slight, single drop of water, of that huge, full, flowing Riuer, which is prepared for vs, in Heauen. It is a verie shame, & scorne; (and really I employ it all, against my self; (and if it were possible, for Soules to be affronted, euen in Heauen, I should haue cause to find my self ashamed when I were there, more then anie Creature) to thinke that we should expect, to enioy * so great benedictions, and delights, and

* *This Saint yovv see, vvas certainly no Protestant.*

and glorie, as is to be infinit in that next Life, and all, at the onlie coſt, of our deare Lord IESVS. And ſhall we not weep, perhaps, at leaſt, with the Daughters of *Ieruſalem*, ſince we will not helpe him to carrie the Croſſe, as *Simon Cyreneus* did? Or can we euer thinke of coming to enioy that, by the way, and meanes of pleaſures, and paſſe-times, which he vouchſafed to get, and gaine for vs, vpon the price of his owne moſt pretious Bloud? This is abſolutly impoſſible. And can we thinke, by our aſpiring to vaine Honour, that we may be able to remedie, and redreſſe that huge contempt, and ſcorne, which he endured for vs? There is no manner of ſenſe, in anie ſuch cõceipt. No, no; the courſe is vtterly miſtaken; and we ſhall neuer be able to ariue, at that iourneys end, by anie ſuch erroneous way, as this. Your Reuerence muſt cry-out alowd, to make theſe truths be heard, and beleiued, by the world. And ſince it hath pleaſed Almightie God, to take this power, and libertie, from me, I would alwaies be crying them out, to my ſelf; but both he heard me, and I came alſo to vnderſtand him, ſo very late, as may be ſeen, by what I haue written heer; and it is no leſſe, then matter of extreame confuſion to me, to ſpeake of it; and therefore I will now hold my peace; and, for the preſent, will only ſay that, which I haue been conſidering ſometimes; which is, that I humbly beſeech Almightie God, to bring me once, to ſuch tearmes, as that I may enioy this immenſe Good. O what an accidentall

dentall glorie, and guſt, will it be, for the Bleſſed Saints of Heauen, who enioy this felicitie, when they ſhall find, that, although it were late, yet at length, they left nothing vnperformed, which it was poſſible for them to doe, for the loue of Almightie God? Nor did they faile, to preſent him, with the verie vttermoſt of whatſoeuer they could offer, in all kindes, according to the power, which they had, and to the condition, wherein they were placed; he giuing them ſtill more, who had more. How rich will he then, find himſelf to be, who left all the riches he had, for Chriſt our Lord? How full of honour, who reiected all honour; and tooke no pleaſure, in anie other thing, then to find himſelf abaſed, and deſpiſed, for the loue of him. How wiſe will he ſee himſelf then, who reioyced to ſee the world, hold him for a foole; ſince they called Wiſdome it ſelf, by that name? But how few of ſuch, as theſe, are there now, in the world, by reaſon of our great Sinnes? Alas, it ſeemes, that all they, are ſpent, and gone, long agoe, whome the world was wont to eſteē for madd fooles, when they ſaw them performe thoſe heroicall acts, of true Louers of Chriſt our Lord. O world! O world! How doſt thou goe gaining Honour, by procuring, that few may haue the wit, to vnderſtand thee right? But now, to what a paſſe are we come, ſince ſome will needs conceiue, that God is the * better ſerued by them, when they get themſelues to be held, for diſcreet, and wiſe? yea this indeed, muſt needs be ſo,

* *The Maſque of Pride.*

ſo, as now we are growne to vnderſtand the word, Diſcretion. For, now, we will needs make our ſelues beleiue, that it is matter, forſooth, of ſmall edification, not to goe, vp, and downe the world, with great authoritie, and compoſition of cloathing, and dreſſing; euerie one, according to his condition. Nay euen to the Fryer, and Preiſt, and Nunne, ſome are now growne to be of opinion, that, to weare anie thing, which is old, or peiced, were a kind of noueltie, and a giuing ſcandall to the weake; and ſo it is alſo now, if they liue with much recollection, and vſe Mentall Prayer. To ſuch a paſſe, the world is growne. But the ſtudie, and practiſe of Chriſtian Perfection, & the great impulſes, which the Saints were wõt to haue, for the obtaining thereof, is the thing, which, I beleiue, doth more harme to the miſerable, & wretched actions, which are cõmitted by euill men, in theſe times, then it could poſſibly be of ſcandall, to anie Creature, that ſuch, as are Religious, ſhould publiſh that, to the world, by their workes, of which they talke by their words; to the end, that ſo, Mankinde might grow to hold this world, in meane accoũt. For, out of ſuch kindes of ſcandall, as theſe, our Lord would draw great ſeruice, for himſelf, & good, for them. And if ſome men would needs be ſcandalized at it, others would yet haue remorſe; & at leaſt, we ſhould remaine with ſome little deſigne, or draught of that, which Chriſt our Lord, & his Apoſtles, endured for vs, ſince we haue now, more need of it, then euer.

But

But O, what an excellent example, did Almightie God take lately from vs, in the person of that Blessed man, *Fray* * *Pedro de Alcantara*? The world was now no longer able, euen to endure such a Perfection, as his; for now, forsooth, they say, that the health of men, is growne weaker; and that now, we doe not liue in those former times. But that holie man, liued in this time, and yet, he had as full, and great Spirit towards Almightie God, as men had in the dayes of old; and so, he trode the world downe, vnder his feet. And though euerie bodie doe not goe bare-foot, nor performe so sharp, and strict pennance, as he, yet are there manie other wayes, as I haue sayd before, whereby a man may treade the world, vnder his feet; and our Lord, will teach vs these wayes, when he findes, that a man's minde is fitt, and well-prepared for them. And how great an one, did Almightie God bestow vpon this Saint, of whome now I speake; to goe, through seauen and fourtie yeares of his life, with so sharp, and rigourous pennance, as is generally knowne? And I will say some little thing of it, because I know, that it is all, most certainly true.

**An admirable example of Pennance.*

He told me a certaine particular, and so he also did an other, from whome he was as little curious to conceale himself, as from me; but as for me, the only reason, why he did it, was the loue he bore me; because our Lord, would haue it so; to the end, that he might help me, and encourage me also, in a certaine time, of so great necessitie, as I haue related.

And

And now I will declare, how, to the best of my remembrance, he said, that he had slept, but one hower and a half, in the foure and twentie howers, of day, and night, for two and fourtie yeares togeather; and that it was the greatest mortification, and trouble of pennance, that he had felt, in those beginnings, to ouercome himself, in point of sleep; and that, in order also to this end, he was alwaies, at other times, either standing vpon his feet, or els kneeling; and that only, when he slept, he satt; and that with his head, leaning aside, vpon a certaine little peice of wood, which was fastned for that purpose, in the wall. To extend his bodie at length, in his Cell, was not possible for him, though he should haue a minde to it; for it is knowne, to haue had but foure foot, and a half, in length. In all these two and fourtie yeares, he neuer put on his Capouch, or Hood, how hot soeuer the Sunne, or how great soeuer the rayne might be; nor did he euer weare anie thing vpon his feet; nor was his bodie clad, but only with a Habit of thick, course Sackcloath, without anie other thing at all, vpon him; and this was so very straight, as that he might be only able, to put it on, with a little short Mantle of the same, vpon it. He told me, that, when the weather was extreamly cold, he was wont to put off his sayd Mantle, and to leaue also, the doore, and the little window of his Cell, open; that so, when afterward, he put the Mantle on againe, and shut his doore, he might giue his

bodie,ſo much contentment by it,as that it might be quieted,without more cloathing. It was a very ordinarie thing with him, not to eat, till the third day, after he had eaten laſt; and he told me (by way of anſwer, to the wonder, in which I was at it,) that this, was a thing very poſſible, for one, who would accuſtome himſelf to it. And a certaine Companion of his, alſo told me, that it hapned for him ſometimes, not to eat anie thing at all, in eight dayes; but that, perhaps, might happen, when he was in Prayer; for, he vſed to haue great Rapts, and vehement impulſes, or impetuoſities of the loue of Almightie God; whereof my ſelf was once an eye-witnes. His pouertie, was extreame; and ſo alſo was his Mortification, euen from his youth. For he told me, that, in his time, it had hapned to him, to liue three yeares, in ſome one Houſe of his owne Order, and yet, not to know anie one of the Religious, of the ſame Houſe, but only by their ſpeech; for he neuer lifted-vp his eyes; and ſo, whenſoeuer he was to goe, of neceſſitie, to anie place, either in the ſtreets, or vpon high-wayes, he could, by no meanes, tell, how to doe it, but by following the other Religious. As for woemen, he neuer looked vpon anie of them, for the ſpace of manie yeares; and told me, that it was iuſt all one with him, to ſee anie bodie, or not to ſee them. When I came at length, to know him, he was very old; and his weaknes, and leanenes ſo extreame, that he ſeemed not to be compoſed, & made, but as euen

of

of the verie rootes of trees. With all this sanctitie of his, he was very affable, though yet he were wont to expresse himselfe, in very few words, vnlesse it were by occasion of some questions, which might be asked him; and in that case, he was excellent companie, for he had a very choice Vnderstanding. I could haue a minde, to say very much more of him, if I feared not, that your Reuerence would aske me, why I put my self vpon this kind of discourse; yea and I haue not written euen this little, without some feare. And therefore I say no more, but only, that he dyed, as he liued, in preaching, and admonishing the Religious of his Order. And when he saw, that he was euen come to an end, he sayd the Psalme of: *Lætatus sum in his, quæ dicta sunt mihi: in domum Domini ibimus*; *I haue reioyced in that, which they haue sayd to me: we will goe into the house of our Lord*; and so, stooping dowe, and kneeling, he dyed.

After this, our Lord hath been pleased to let me enioy more of him now, then I did, when he was aliue; for, he giues me counsaile, in diuerse occasions; and I haue seen him manie times, in extreame glorie. The first time, that he appeared to me, he sayd: *O how happie pennance was that, which hath obtained so high a reward!* with manie other things of that nature. A yeare before he dyed, he appeared to me, when we were absent, from one another; and it was declared to me, that he should dye; and I aduertised him thereof, whilst he was distant some leagues, from me. At the

the instant, when he expired afterward, he also appeared to me, and told me, that he was then going to rest. I did not beleiue the thing; but yet I related it to some; and within eight dayes after, the newes came to vs, that he was dead; or rather, to speake more properly, that he had then, begunne to liue for euer.

And heer, behold, how the seuere Pennance of his life, was finished in so large a proportion of glorie, that me thinkes, he is of more comfort to me now, then when he was heer. Our Lord told me once, that men should not aske anie thing, in his name, wherein he would not heare them; and my self haue recommended manie to him, to the end, that he might begg them of our Lord; and I haue found them granted. Let the same Lord be Blessed for euer; Amen.

But what a talking haue I kept heer, that so I might stirre your Reuerence vp, not to make the least account at all, of anie thing, in this world, as if you knew not this, already? or, as if you were not resolued to leaue it all? or rather, as if you had not already put all this, in execution? But I see such a deale of perdition in the world, that howsoeuer my saying it, serues for nothing, but only to wearie me, by writing it, yet withall it is a kind of vnwearying, and ease for me, to doe it; and so, all that, which I am saying, proues to be against my self. Our Blessed Lord forgiue me, whereinsoeuer I may haue offended, concerning this particular; and I beseech your Reuerence

alſo, to pardon me, for incommodating you, to little purpoſe; but it ſeemes, that I will needs make you doe Pennance, for that, wherein my ſelf commit the Sinne.

THE EIGHT AND TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

She treats of the great Fauours, vvhich our Lord did her; and hovv he appeared to her, the firſt time. She declares, that it vvas a Viſion, vvhich shevved it ſelf by vvay of the Imagination; and diſcouers, the great effects, and teſtimonies, vvhich ſuch things leaue in the Soule, vvhen they are of Almightie God. This Chapter is of great inſtruction, and deſerues to be noted, much.

BVt now, to returne to our purpoſe, I had that kind of Viſion aforeſayd, for ſome few dayes, after a kind of continuall manner; and it was ſo vſefull to me, that I neuer went then, out of Prayer; and beſides, whatſoeuer I then hapned to doe, I procured it might be in ſuch ſort, as that it ſhould not diſpleaſe him, whome I euidently ſaw to be there, as a witnes of all that, which paſſed. And though it be very true, that ſometimes, I had ſome feare, through the multitude of thoſe things, which

which they would be saying to me, yet that trouble would not vse to last long; because I was well assured, and satisfyed, by our Lord himself.

Being one day in Prayer, it pleased our Blessed Lord, to shew me his Hands, and nothing but his Hands; and they had such an excesse, and heigth of beautie in them, as I am not able, by anie meanes, to expresse. But this, struck me into a very great feare; as, indeed, euerie noueltie is wont to bring me, in the beginnings of anie Supernaturall Fauour, which our Lord is pleased to doe me. Within few dayes after this, I saw also his Diuine Face; which did totally, me thinkes, leaue me absorpt. For my part, I could not vnderstand, why our Blessed Lord shewed himself to me so, by little and little; since afterwards, he resolued to doe me the Fauour, that I might see him, all; till I came to vnderstand, that our Lord went guiding, and conducting me, according to my naturall weaknes. And let him be eternally Blessed for it; since so great, and high Glorie, as that, all togeather, encountring with a Subiect, which was so base, and wicked, as my self, would neuer haue been endured; and thus our Blessed, and Mercifull Lord, went so disposing of things, as I haue heer expressed. Your Reuerence will, perhaps, imagine, that there was no need of much courage, and strength of mind, for the beholding of a Face, and Hands, which were so beautifull. But yet it is to be vnderstood, that such Bodies, as are * glorifyed, haue so very great a heigth of

* *Humane frailty, and celestiall glory, are not compatible.*

beautie, that the glorie, which they bring, to behold a thing so delightfull, and Supernaturall, doth euen, as it were, exceed our capacitie; and so, consequently, I grew to be all, in much disorder, and trouble; though yet afterwards, I remained with certaintie, and securitie, and such other effects, as that all feare did quickly vanish.

Vpon a certaine day of S. Paul, whilst I was hearing Masse, the whole Humanitie of Christ our Lord, was represented to me, as it vses to be painted, after the Resurrection; but with so great Beautie, and Maiestie, as I wrote once to your Reuerence, when you commanded me so expresly to doe it; and I remember, that I was troubled enough, at it. For, in fine, those things cannot be done, without a bodie's euen annihilating her selfe, who doth them; but yet howsoeuer, I did, what you commanded me, the best I could; and therefore I need not take care, to repeate it, so parparticularly, now. Only I will declare thus much, that, if there were no other thing, euen in Heauen, to giue delight, and gust, to our sight, but only the excessiue beautie of Glorifyed Bodies, that felicity would be euen immense; but especially, to behold that most Sacred Humanitie of Iesus Christ our Lord, must be matter of incomparable Glorie. For, since the Maiestie thereof, is discouered to be so great, whensoeuer it is represented to vs heer, according to that proportion, whereof our miserie, in this mortall life of ours, is capable; what, doe we thinke it will then occurr

curr to be, when we shall so very entirely be admitted, to enioy so high a Good. This Vision, though it be Imaginarie, (or representing it self, by way of Mentall Image, to the Imagination) was neuer seen by me, by these eyes of my Bodie; nor indeed, was anie other Vision, that I euer had, but only, by the eyes of my Minde. And they, who know these things, better then I, affirme, that the former Vision, is of a higher, & more perfect kind, then this; and this also much more, then those others, which are seen, by these eyes, of Flesh, and Bloud. For, these latter, they say, are of the lowest kind of all, and wherein the Diuel is able to induce & impose most Illusions; though yet then, I could not vnderstand any such matter; but rather desired, that, when I was to receiue anie Fauour of that kind, it might be so, as that I might see it, with my corporeall eyes; to the end, that my Ghostlie Father, might no longer tell me, that I did but fancie such things. And so it hapned also to my self, as soone as it was past (but it was euen, as it were, but at the verie instant) that euen my self also conceiued, that I did but fancie it indeed; and so I was a little troubled sometimes, for haueing told my Ghostlie Father, as I did; as doubting, whether I had not deceiued him. And now, this was the occasion of another lamentation of mine; and so I went to him againe, and told him of it. Vpon this, he asked me, whether indeed, I had thought so, before; and whether I had anie purpose to deceiue him. As for me, I told him, what

* *Imaginary Visions represented to, & by the senses are of the lowest ranke, & most subiect to danger.*

I held to be the truth; I, who (foraſmuch as I am able to vnderſtand of my ſelf) had no minde at all, to lye; nor intended anie ſuch matter, as that; nor would I, for the whole world, haue told him anie one thing, for another. Now this, did he know very well; and ſo he did his beſt, to quiet me. But I had ſo great auerſion from going to giue him trouble with theſe things, that I know not, how the Diuel could make me, for my greater torment, conceiue, that I had feigned, in what I had ſayd.

But our Lord made ſuch haſt to doe me a Fauour, and to vnfold this truth to me, that I grew quickly, to be out of all doubt, whether it were a thing of fancie, or no; and ſince that time, I ſee my follie very clearly. For though I ſhould employ manie yeares, in conceiuing, how I might be able, to figure a thing of ſo extreame beautie, I ſhould neuer haue either the power, or the witt, to doe it; for, it did farre exceed all that, which can poſſibly be imagined in this world, by the verie clearnes, and brightnes thereof. Nor yet is it anie ſuch brightnes, as dazles; but a brightnes, which is accompanied, with a moſt ſweet kind of beautie; a brightnes, I ſay, there is infuſed, which giues extreame delight to the ſight, and which is farre from wearying it; nor doth the light thereof, alſo offend, whereby we ſee this obiect of ſo Diuine Beautie. This, I ſay, is a light, ſo very different from all that, of this inferiour world, that euen the brightnes of the Sunne it ſelf, which we ſee,

ſee, is ſo dimme, and dull a thing, in compariſon of that claritie, and light, which is repreſented to our ſight, by this meanes, that euen the eyes would ſcarce open themſelues, to behold it. For it is, as if it were a moſt pure water, running all vpon Chriſtall, with the Sunne reflecting vpon it, and ſtriking through it; in compariſon of ſome other, which were of a muddie kind, and in a clowdie day; and which were running alſo vpon earth. Not yet, that there is anie Sunne repreſented in it; nor is that Light, like the Light of the Sunne; for, in fine, this Light of the Viſion, ſeemes a very naturall Light; whereas the other is but a kind of artificiall thing, in compariſon thereof. This is a Light, which neuer ſets; but as it is euer Light, ſo is there nothing, which can diſturbe it; but in fine, it is a thing of ſuch a kind, as that, how ſublime ſoeuer the vnderſtanding of anie Creature might be, he would neuer, in all the dayes of his life, be able to conceiue rightly, what kind of thing it were. And it pleaſes Almightie God, to ſet it before vs, ſo very ſpeedily, that we cannot open our eyes ſo ſoone, if that were needfull for the ſeeing it; but it helpes vs indeed, no more, in this caſe, to haue them open, then ſhut. For, whenſoeuer our Lord is pleaſed, we ſee it, euen whether we will, or no. Nor is there anie diſtraction in the world, which may be able, to diuert vs from it; nor is there anie power, which can reſiſt it; nor is there alſo, on the other ſide, anie manner of care, and diligence, which may ſuffice

to procure it; and I haue had good experience of this, as I shall find a fitt time to declare.

But that, which I would faine relate now, is the manner, how our Blessed Lord is pleased to shew himself, by these Visions. I say not, that I will declare, in what sort, this so strong a light may be able to conuey it self, into the inward sense, and to imprint so exact, and cleare an Image, vpon the Vnderstanding, as to make it directly seem, to be very there; for, this point belongs to such, as are learned; and our Lord hath not been pleased, to giue me to comprehend the manner of it; and, in myself, I am so very ignorant, and of so grosse an Vnderstanding, that, howsoeuer men haue endeauoured much, to declare it to me, I haue not yet, been able to conceaue the way, and manner of it. And this is very certaine, that, howsoeuer it may seem to your Reuerence, that my Vnderstanding is liuelie, and quick, yet there is really no such thing; and I haue found, what I am about to say, to be true, by the experience of manie particulars; that, namely, it embraces, and comprehends no more, then iust that verie thing, vpon which they will haue it feed. Yea and sometimes, he, who was my Confessarius, would be euen amazed, at my ignorances, in manie kinds; and he neuer made me vnderstand, nor did I, indeed, desire to know, how Almightie God did this; or how this could be; nor did I aske him about it. Though yet, as I haue sayd, I treated manie yeares, with men of great

great learning, to know, whether this, or that, were a Sinne, or no; for in this, I was not wanting; but as for the reſt, I then had no need, to ſtand thinking of more, then that Almightie God was the Authour of all; and I ſaw, that I was now, not to wonder at anie thing, but only to conſider, how manie reaſons I had, to praiſe him. Nay, the things, which carried difficultie with them, did breed deuotion, in me; and the more difficultie, the more deuotion. But I will therefore now, declare that, which I am come to vnderſtand, by experience; namely, how our Bleſſed Lord doth this; and your Reuerence will expreſſe it better, and will vnfold all that, which you may find obſcure, and I, not know, how to deliuer.

It ſeemed to me, indeed, in ſome reſpects, that it was an Image, or diſtinct repreſentation, which I ſaw; but, in manie other, no; but rather, that it was Chriſt our Lord himſelf; conſidering the exceſſiue kind of claritie, wherewith he vouchſafed, to impart himſelf to me. And yet ſometimes, it was after ſo vndiſtinct a manner, that me thought, it was a Repreſentation, or Image; but yet ſtill, not like thoſe deſignes, and draughts, or Pictures of things, which are made heer, how perfect ſoeuer they may be; for I haue ſeen, both very manie, and very good ones, of this kind. But it is a very great impertinencie, to conceiue, that anie one of them, comes home, to the life; but, how well ſoeuer they be drawne, they will neuer yet atiue to reach the Naturall in all reſ-

pects; for, in fine, the one is aliue, and the other, is dead. But, let vs lay this aside, though yet the relation of one, to the other, hold very well. And still I say not, that I frame a Comparison, between Christ our Lord himself, and that, which I sayd I saw; for, Comparisons neuer agree so perfectly, and entirely, as these two things did. But the truth is, that there is the same difference, in what I saw, from anie Image, which there is between a thing, that liues, and a thing, which is painted. And if you will needs haue this, to haue been an Image, I am sure, it was a liuing Image, and not a dead man, but Christ aliue; and it giues me also to vnderstand, that he is both God, & Man; and that, not so as he was layd in the Sepulcher, but as he was afterwards, in the Resurrection. And sometimes, he comes with such an immense kind of Maiestie, that no Creature can be able to doubt, but that it is our verie Lord himself; and especially, after my receauing the Blessed Sacrament; for, then we know well, that he is there, since we vnderstand it by Faith; and this seemes, to be the same Lord, with that. And he shewes himself then, for so true, and entire a Lord, of that little house, that the whole Soule, sees her self, to be euen dissolued, consumed, and annihilated, in Christ our Lord.

Deare IESVS! and how should one be able, to giue the heigth of that Maiestie, to be vnderstood, wherewith thou comest to shew thy self, in these occasions? and how absolutly doth the Soule re-

solue

ſolue, that thou art the Lord of the whole world, and of the Heauens; and of a thouſand worlds; and of innumerable Heauens, and worlds, which thou canſt create; conſidering that high Maieſtie, with which thou repreſenteſt thy ſelf, to her? For then ſhe knowes, that all this world is iuſt nothing, in reſpect of that, whereof thou deſerueſt to haue dominion. Heer, O my IESVS, doth the Soule ſee very clearly, that it is but a beggarlie kind of power, which the Diuels haue, in compariſon of thine; and how he, who is ſo happie, as to pleaſe thee, may tread all the power of Hell, vnder his feet. Heer the Soule findes the reaſon, which the Diuels had, to tremble, when thou didſt deſcend to *Limbus Patrum*; and how they would haue wiſhed, to haue been rather, in thouſands of other, and lower Hells, then to haue endured the ſight of ſo high a Maieſtie, as thine. But I perceiue, that thou art heer, diſpoſed, to let our Soules ſee, how potent thou art; and how great, the power of thy moſt Sacred Humanitie is, when it is accompanied by thy Diuinitie.

* Heer is it well repreſented, what kind of thing, the Day of Iudgement will be, where we ſhall ſee the mightie Maieſtie of this King; and behold his great rigour, towards the wicked. Heer, is true Humilitie layd vp, and left in the Soule, by ſeeing her owne miſerie, whereof now ſhe can be ignorant no longer. Heer, that confuſion, and true repentance for Sinne; where, euen when ſhe is ſeeing, how greatly our Lord ſhewes her his loue, yet

* *The great effects of an admirable, and moſt ſublime Viſion.*

yet knowes she not, where to dispose of her self, but is, as it were, euen annihilated, outright. I say, this kind of Vision, is of so excessiue power, and strength, when our Lord is pleased to shew a Soule so eminent a portion of his Maiestie, and greatnes, by it, that I hold it for an impossible thing, (vnlesse our Lord should be pleased to assist her, by making her remaine in Rapt, and Extasis, and so to loose the Vision of that Diuine presence, by the act of enioying) that anie mortall Creature, should be able to endure it, at the present; though yet afterward, it is no impossible thing, to forget it. And yet, still, this can not be wholy forgotten; in regard, that that Maiestie, and Beautie, is so very deeply imprinted there; but only, when our Lord is pleased, that the Soule shall suffer some such great kind of drynes, and solitude, as I will declare afterward; for then it seemes, that euen one forgets Almightie God himself. But howsoeuer, the Soule is growne now to be clearly, another kind of thing, then what she was before; and is alwaies, as it were, euen steeped, and bathed, in Almightie God; and there seemes, in my opinion, to be a new, and more liuelie kind of Loue, communicated to her, in a very high degree. For, though that kind of Vision aforesayd (which I declared, to represent Almightie God, without anie Image) be a thing more sublime, and high, in it self, yet, for the making it continue long, in our memorie, and to entertaine, and keep our thoughts well employed, so great is the weaknes of

of our condition, that it makes very much to our purpose, when so Diuine a Presence, as that, of our Blessed Lord, is represented, and lodged, in the Imaginatiue part of our Minde. And therefore, these two kinds of Visions, are wont to come alwaies, togeather. And indeed, it is thus, that they come. For, the excellencie, and beautie, and glorie, of the most Holie Humanitie of Christ our Lord, is beheld, with the eyes of the Soule. And by that other way, which is now declared, we grow to be giuen to vnderstand, that he is God; and powerfull; yea and omnipotent; and that he commands, and gouernes all things; and that his loue, doth euen repleniſh them all.

This kind of Vision, is to be valued, at a very high rate; and it is also, in my opinion, without danger; for, in fine, it is discerned by the effects, that the Diuel hath no power at all, heerin. And yet it is true, that three, or foure seuerall times, he hath had a minde, to represent our Lord himself to me, after this manner; that is to say, by way of such a false kind of representation. For, he takes the forme of Flesh; but it comes not within the compasse of his power, to counterfeit it, with anie such kind of glorie, as when it is indeed of Almightie God. The Diuel is wont to make certaine representations, for the destroying of some true Vision, which the Soule hath seen; but so also doth she her best, to resist the vexations, which he giues her; though then, she be so disquieted, and disordered,

dered, euen by this verie diligence, that she looses that deuotion, and gust, which she had before; and remaines also, without anie Prayer at all. This hapned to me, three, or foure times, in the beginning, as I was saying. But this, of the false Vision, is so very different a kind of thing, from the other, that, whosoeuer hath ariued to the onlie Prayer of Quiet, will, I beleiue, vnderstand this busines, by the verie effects, which haue been spoken of, in that Discourse, which concernes those *VVords*, or *Speeches*, which sometimes are imparted to, and imprinted in, the Soule. And I hold this assertion to be a most certaine thing; and vnlesse a Soule should haue, euen a kind of minde, to be abused, and deceiued, I beleiue, the Diuel will not be able to doe it, if she walke with humilitie, and simplicitie; that is, with sinceritie of minde.

** The differēce is easily found, both betvveen a true Vision, and a false; and betvveen a true Vision, and a Fancy.*

Whosoeuer, I say, hath receiued anie true Vision from Almightie God, will instantly perceiue, and iudge * of another, which is contrarie, and false; for, though anie such false one, may beginne, to giue a kind of Regalo, and gust, yet the Soule will shake that off; and besides, in my opinion, the gust will be, euen different, in it self; and, not carrying so much, as an apparance of a Loue, which is pure, and chast, it growes to be soone discouered, from whence it comes. So that, whereseoeuer there is anie experience, the Diuel will not be able, to doe anie Soule hurt, in this kind.

But

But now, that all this kind of Vision, should be be but a meer Imagination, or conceipt, is clearly, and entirely, an impossible thing; and hath no colour at all. For, the high beautie, and fairenes, of one onlie hand, doth absolutly outstripp all Imagination. And besides, without our euer haueing thought of anie such obiect, or reflecting vpon anie one of this kind, to see such things present, and all at an instant, which could neuer haue been so fitted, and adiusted, by the Imagination of man (in regard, that it is so mightily of a superiour kind, as I haue sayd, from that, which we are able to comprehend in this world) it must also be impossible, for the aforesayd reason. And yet, though we could doe somewhat of this kind (not withstanding all that, which is sayd) it would yet, not be possibly done, vpon this other reason, which I will now declare. For, if we should represent anie such thing, in the strength of our owne Vnderstanding (besides, that it would not haue anie such great operation, as this true Vision hath; nor indeed would it, in effect, haue anie at all) it would be at the most, but as one, who would very faine grow to sleep; whereas yet, he should, indeed, be awake; because he cannot yet fall asleep. But if he desire to sleep, and haue need of it, and withall, haue anie infirmitie, or weaknes, in his head, which forbidds it, he yet procures, of himselfe, to get into a slumber, and vses all his diligences, in order to that end; and sometimes, he euen half thinkes, that he doth somewhat. But

still

ſtill, if, in verie deed, it be not true, and reall ſleep, it will not ſuſtaine him, nor giue ſtrength to his Head; Nay rather, it will, ſometimes, fall out to be ſo much the more idle. And iuſt ſo, is it alſo partly, in this caſe; for then, will the Soule grow emptie, and idle, and not be ſuſtained, and ſtrong, but rather diſordered, and diſguſted; whereas, in the other former caſe of ours, it is paſt anie power of mine, to declare, what treaſures are acquired; when not only the Soule is enriched, but euen the Bodie alſo it ſelf, gets temper, and health.

Now, this reaſon, with others, did I alleadge, when they told me, ſometimes, that thoſe things were of the Diuel; and, at other times, that I did but fancie them to my ſelf. And this hapned often to me, and I would alſo, be bringing certaine Compariſons, the beſt I could; and our Lord made me light vpon them; but yet all ſerued me ſtill, to little purpoſe; for, there being very holie perſons, in that place, and I being euen miſerie it ſelf, in compariſon of them, and our Lord not guiding them, by this way, they would inſtantly be growing into feare, that my ſinnes, in all apparance, were the meanes, to produce thoſe effects; and ſo, it went, vp, and downe, from one to another, in ſuch ſort, as that they came to be acquainted, with theſe ſecrets of mine; though, for my part, I diſcouered them to no Creature, but only to my Ghoſtlie Father; or to ſuch, as he directed me, to impart them.

But I remember, I ſayd to them once, that if they,

they, who told me theſe things, had related to me, that ſome perſon, with whome I had been much acquainted, and with whome I had ſpoken but very then, had not yet, been that perſon indeed, but that I had only fancyed it to my ſelf, and that they knew it for certaine; I ſhould without all doubt, haue much more eaſily beleiued them, then euen the verie thing, which I ſaw. But * yet now, on the other ſide, if that perſon had left certaine Iewells with me, and that they remained ſtill, in my hands, as pawnes of the great loue he bore me, and that formerly I had been the owner of no ſuch Iewells, whereas now I ſaw, I was rich, who before, had been ſo poore, I ſhould then, not be able to beleiue them, euen though I deſired it, eſpecially, when I could ſhew theſe Iewells of mine, to others. For euerie bodie knew me well enough, and they ſaw clearly, that my Soule, was growne to be another kind of thing, then before; and ſo I told mine owne Ghoſtlie Father. For, the difference was come to be great, in manie kinds, and not in anie doubtfull, or diſguiſeable manner; but ſo, as that all Creatures might diſcerne it clearly. And I remember, alſo, that I was wont to ſay, that I could not tell, how to beleiue, that the Diuel would doe this, to deceiue me; and how, ſince he would be glad to carrie me away with him to Hell, he could ſerue himſelf of this meanes, which was ſo very contrarie to his owne end; Namely, to roote-out Vice, and to plant Vertue, and ſtrength of Spirit,

* *A plaine demonſtration.*

in place thereof; for I found, and that very clearly, that I grew, once, at an instant, to be wholy another Creature, then I was before.

My Ghostlie Father, as I was saying, was a Father *of the Societie of* IESVS, and a very holie man; and he also made the same answer to others, as I came to vnderstand afterward. He was a person of much discretion, and of great humilitie; but yet, that humilitie of his, grew to cost me a great deale of trouble. For, though he were a man of much learning, and besides, of great Prayer, yet put he * no trust at all, in himself; and, our Lord not guiding his Soule by this way, he was subiect to much trouble with me, in seuerall kinds. And afterward I came to know, that they wished him to take heed of me, and to be carefull, least the Diuel should deceiue him, by making him beleiue anie part of that, which I should tell him; and to this purpose, they would be alleadging the examples of some others, to him. All this, gaue me vexation enough; and, by degrees, I came so farre, as to feare, that I should grow scarce able, to find anie bodie, who would heare my Confessions; but that euerie one would be flying from me, in this kind. So that, for my part, I did nothing but weepe; and it was the prouidence of Almightie God, that this Father, would yet still continue to heare me. But indeed, he was so great a Seru nt of our Lord, that there was nothing, which he would not suffer, for his sake; and so he would still be adusing me, to be sure, not to

** In order to the guideing of others, a Directour may easily haue too meane an opinion of himselfe.*

to offend Almightie God; nor to swarue from the directions, which he gaue me; and that I should not feare, that he would faile me; and still he would also be animating, and quieting me; and euer he would, in particular, command me, that I should conceale nothing from him; which I alwayes obserued; and I doing thus, he would alwaies tell me, that the Diuel would be able, to doe me no hurt; but rather, that our Blessed Lord would not faile, to draw good, out of that ill, which the Diuel would be attempting, to doe my Soule. This Soule of mine, did I procure to perfect, to the vttermost of my power; and as for my Ghostlie Father, I did (through the feare of Illusions, wherein I was) obey him, in all things; though yet, but after an imperfect manner. But he had trouble enough with me, when I confessed my self to him, in these difficult times, which lasted aboue the space of three whole yeares; for, in the great persecutions, which I had; and in manie things, wherein our Lord permitted, that the world should make ill iudgements of me, (and manie of them, without anie fault of mine) I would euer be coming with them, to him; and he was blamed, in respect of me; whereas yet he was in no fault at all. I thinke it would haue been wholy impossible, that he should haue endured it, so long, if he had not been a man of much sanctitie; but our Lord did animate him greatly, and enable him to endure so very much. For he was still, to make answer to all them, who

held me to be a loſt Soule; but they beleiued him not; and on the other ſide, he was alſo to take care, to quiet me, and to recouer me out of that feare, wherein I was, by frighting me, with a greater; and beſides, he was alſo to endeauour to ſatisfye me, in another reſpect; in regard, that, vpon euerie Viſion, which was new to me, our Lord was pleaſed to permit, that afterward I ſhould be ſubiect, to very great feares. Now, as all this proceeded, both from my being, and haueing been, a very great Sinner: ſo yet would he comfort me ſtill, with much pietye, and compaſſion. But yet ſtill if he had confided as much in himſelf, as he might well haue done, I had not ſuffered ſo much. For, our Lord gaue him to vnderſtand the truth, in all things; and I am perſwaded, that the verie Sacrament of Pennance, which I frequented with him, gaue him light.

Thoſe other Seruants of Almightie God, who could not make themſelues ſure of my well-doing, were wont to be very conuerſant with me. And when I would caſually be ſpeaking, now, and then, of ſome things, they would be vnderſtanding them, after a different manner. Now * there was one of theſe, whome I particularly loued; for, my Soule was infinitly obliged to him; and he was a very holie man. For my part, I was extreamly troubled, to ſee, that I could not make my ſelf be vnderſtood rightly, by him, whilſt he alſo, on the other ſide, did extraordinarily deſire my good; and that our Lord might once vouchſafe,

** This Saint was hugely vexed, by the inſatisfaction which ſhe receiued from many Spirituall men.*

safe, to giue me light. And so, when I would be relating some things to them, without much reflection vpon what I sayd, it would seem to them, to be a signe of little humilitie, in me; and as soone, as afterward, they discerned me, to commit anie one single fault (whereas they might very eatily haue discerned manie) all grew instantly to be condemned by them. Sometimes, they would be asking me certaine questions; and I would answer them, with plainenes, and without much reseruation, yea or euen reflection; and then, forsooth, they would be thinking, that I had a minde to teach them; and that I held my self, for some shrewd woeman; and vpon this, would they all, goe instantly to my Ghostlie Father; for certainly, they desired my good; but yet then, would he grow, to chide me. And this, lasted a long time, I being afflicted manie wayes, on the one side; and yet, being, on the other, so visited by the Fauours of our Blessed Lord, as I found my selfe to be, I was indeed very well able, to endure that other misery.

And now I relate all this, to the end, that it may the better be vnderstood, how very great a trouble it is, not to haue some such person at hand, as hath experience, in the way of Spirit. So that really, if our Blessed Lord, had not fauoured me, in such sort, as he did, I know not what would haue become of me, at length; since there were occasions enow, to haue put me, euen out of my witts; and sometimes, I saw my self in such tear-

mes, that I knew not, what to doe, but only, to lift-vp mine eyes, to our Lord. For, as the contradiction, and opposition of such, as were good, and worthie men, towards a poore, weake, and wicked woeman, like my self, and so timorous, as I also was, may, perhaps, seem, to be scarce worth the relating: so yet, I hauing passed through very manie, and great troubles, in this life of mine, I haue found this last, to haue been of the greatest. I humbly beseech our Blessed Lord, that I may haue been able, to doe his Diuine Maiestie, some little Seruice, euen in this; for that they, who accused, and condemned me, did him Seruice in it, I am very sure; and that it all, hath turned to my good.

THE NINE AND TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

She prosecutes the Discourse, which she had begunne; and relates some high Fauours, which our Lord was pleased to doe her; and what his Diuine Maiestie did further, for the securing, and encouraging her minde, and for the enabling her, to answer her Contradictours.

I Haue swarued very much, from my purpose; for I pretended to declare the reasons, whereby to proue, that the thing, whereof I spoke, was not matter of Imagination; for, how should we be able,

able, by meanes of anie endeauour, or ſtudie of ours, to repreſent the Humanitie of Chriſt our Lord, to our ſelues; and to goe ordering, and diſpoſing of his great beautie, for which there would be need of a large time, if we would pretend, to frame anie thing, which ſhould be like it. Well may one repreſent it, to his owne Imagination; and ſtand looking vpon it, for ſome time; and conſider his ſhape, and complexion; and ſo goe perfecting it, by little and little; and recommending that Image ouer to his Memorie; for, who can take this power, from the minde? And thus much am I able to doe, by the ſtrength of mine owne Vnderſtanding; But in that other, whereof we were ſpeaking, there is no meanes for this; for we muſt behold that, iuſt then, when our Lord is pleaſed, to repreſent it to vs; and iuſt alſo, what he will, & how he will; Nor is there, in this caſe, anie meanes, either to add, or diminiſh anie thing, how much ſoeuer we may endeauour it, either towards the ſeeing it, or forbearing to ſee it, when we will. For, * whēſoeuer we ſhall diſpoſe our ſelues, to fix our ſight faſt, vpon beholding anie particular thing, the ſight of Chriſt our Lord is inſtantly loſt. It hapned to me, two yeares, and a half, that very ordinarily, Chriſt our Lord was pleaſed to vouchſafe me this Fauour; and it is now, more then three, ſince he hath depriued me of the ſo continuall vſe of this Viſion, by affording me another, of a higher kind; as perhaps I ſhall declare afterward. And I finding, that he

* *This is very fitt to be knowne*

would be speaking to me; and I, the while, beholding that extreame beautie of his, and obseruing the suauitie, with which he vttered those words, by that most Louelie, and Diuine mouth; and sometimes also, with rigour; whilst I, in the meane time, had a kind of extreame desire, to see the colour of those eyes, and the size, and shape, which they had; to the end, that I might be able to relate the same, to my Ghostlie Father; I could neuer yet, obtaine to see them; and my diligence would not serue to procure it, but the Vision was rather absolutly lost. And though * it be very true, that sometimes, I see, he lookes vpon me, with a kind of sweetnes, and compassion; yet this spectacle is of so mightie a force, that the Soule is not able to endure it, but remaines in so high a Rapt, that, to the end she may the better enioy the whole, she wholy looses the sight of this most beautifull obiect. So that, in fine, and in order to this end, it serues to little purpose, either to will, or not to will, anie thing heer; and it growes to be cleare enough, that our Lord lookes for nothing, in these cases, but for humilitie, and confusion of our selues; and for a minde, to take that, which is giuen; and to praise him, who is pleased to impart it. And it holds, in all true Visions, without exception, that a Creature can doe nothing at all, either towards the more, or the lesse; and that all our diligences, put togeather, are neither able to doe anie thing, nor vndoe; for, our Lord will haue vs see, very clearly, that this

* *This is a true* Fortiter sed Suauiter.

this is no worke of ours, but only of his Diuine Maieſtie; and ſo, as that we are little moued, to be the prouder, by them; but they rather make vs more timorous, and more humble; whilſt we find, that as our Lord deprriues vs of a power, to ſee that, which we deſire, ſo he can alſo, take theſe Fauours, yea and his grace, from vs too; in ſuch ſort, as that we may be vtterly loſt. We muſt therefore be, alwaies, walking on, with feare, as long as we ſhall liue heer, in this banniſhment.

Our Lord hath almoſt euer, repreſented himſelf to me, as after his *Reſurrection. He hath alſo done it ſometimes, in the Sacred Hoaſt. Sometimes, for ſtrengthning me, when I chance to be in tribulation, he ſhewes me his Wounds. And ſometimes alſo he vouchſafes that I ſhould ſee him iuſt ſo, as he was vpon the Croſſe; and ſometimes, as in the Garden; yea and alſo, ſome ſeldome times, with his Crowne of Thornes, vpon his Head; and at other times, carrying his Croſſe. Yet this, as I was ſaying, vſes to occurr, but in the time of ſome neceſſitie, either of mine owne, or of others, but yet alwaies, as a Glorifyed Bodie. And I haue ſuffered affronts, and vexations enow, in declaring theſe things; and haue growne ſubiect thereby, to great perſecutions, and feares. They made themſelues ſo very ſure, that all this, was the Diuel, that there wanted not certaine perſons, who wiſhed, that I might be Exorciſed, for that purpoſe; yet this gaue me very little trouble. But the thing, which I felt, in

* *This Saint vvas moſt ſtrangely familiarly, and ſupernaturally viſited by our B Lord.*

good earneſt, was either, when my Ghoſtlie Fathers were afrayd to heare my Confeſſions, or els, when I came to know, that they were told tales. But yet ſtill, vpon the whole matter, I know not how to make my ſelf ſorrie, for hauing ſeen theſe Celeſtiall Viſions; nor would I giue anie one of them all, for all the greatneſſes, and delights, of this whole world; for I euer held theſe things, to be a very great Fauour, of our Lord; and I eſteem them, to be an exceſſiue kind of treaſure; yea and our Lord himſelf hath aſſured me thereof, manie times. Withall, I found my ſelf grow heerby, to loue his Diuine Maieſtie very much; and ſo, to him, would I euer be going to complaine, of all the troubles I had; and I alwayes came out of Prayer, both with comfort, and addition of ſtrength. As for them, I would not preſume, to contradict them; for I ſaw, it made things worſe, as ſeeming to them, that it was want of humilitie, in me; but I communicated them ſtill, to my Ghoſtlie Father; and whenſoeuer he found me afflicted, he was carefull, that I ſhould receaue much comfort, from him.

*A ſtrange Taske, vvhich vvas put, euen by holy men, vpon this Saint.

As my Viſions grew-on to encreaſe, one of them, who aſſiſted me before, who was a man, that vſed to Confeſſe me ſometimes, (when the Sub-Rectour was not in the way, to heare me) beganne to tell me, how it was moſt certaine, that it was the Diuel; and then, they grew to * command me (ſince there was no other meanes, to reſiſt him) that I ſhould alwaies be Croſſing, and

and blessing my self, when I should chance to see anie Vision; and that I should vse some exteriour action, or signe of scorne, that so he might be sure, I held him certainly, to be the Diuel; and that, perhaps, by this meanes, he would come no more; but that yet, I should be afrayd of nothing, because God would keep me still, and would also take that temptation from me. Now, this was painefull enough to me; for, considering that I could not possibly beleiue, but that it was Almightie God, this proceeding was very terrible for me to vndergoe. Nor was it also possible for me, as of my selfe, to desire, that it might be taken from me; but yet, in fine, I performed all those acts, which they commanded; and I besought our Blessed Lord, with much instance, to free me from it; and I did it, with abundance of teares. I begged it also, by the prayers of S. Peter, and S. Paul; in regard, that I hauing had the first of all my Visions, vpon the Day of their Festiuitie, our Lord himself vouchsafed to tell me, that they would so take care of me, as that I might not be deceiued. And accordingly, I haue often seen (and that very clearly, though yet not by way of anie Imaginarie Vision, or represented person) these two Glorious Saints, who are so much my good Patrons, standing by me, vpon my left hand; and that, after a very euident manner. But now, this order of those others, to make signes of contempt, and scorne, whensoeuer I had that Vision of our Blessed Lord, did put me to a mightie kind of paine;

paine; for, when I saw him present, before mine eyes, it was impossible for me to beleiue, that it was the Diuel, though they should haue torne me into a thousand peices, to make me doe it; and therefore, it was a strange kind of Pennance, which they put vpon me. But now, to the end that I might not be so perpetually Crossing my self, I tooke a Crosse into my hands; and this, I did, in effect, alwaies; but, indeed, I vsed not those signes of scorne, so very often; for, that afflicted me, too much. For I well remembred the affronts, & iniuries, which the Iewes had put vpon our Lord; & so I humbly besought him, to pardon me, if I did the like, since I did it, by way of Obedience, to them, whome he had appointed, in his owne place; and I prayed him, not to lay it to my charge, since they were the persons, whome himself had placed in his Church. He told me then, that I should not be troubled at it; and, that I did well, in obeying them; and, that he would bring them, at length, to vnderstand the truth But when they forbad me to vse Prayer, me thought our Lord was growne angrie at it; yea and he bad me tell them, that this was a verie tyrañie in them; and he gaue me also wayes, how to make me know, that this was not a worke of the Diuel; and I will touch vpon some one of them, afterward.

When once I had the Crosse in my hand, which was at the end of my Rosarie, he tooke the same into his; and when he gaue it me againe, it consisted of foure great Stones, incomparably more

more pretious, then Diamonds; for, there is no ſuch thing, in this world, as that, which goes in the Supernatural way; and a Diamond, is but an imperfect, and counterfeit kind of Stone, in compariſon of thoſe others, whereof I ſpeake. Now, theſe Stones had the Fiue Wounds of our Bleſſed Lord, in them, after a moſt curious makeing; and he told me, that I ſhould ſee him, iuſt ſo, from that time forward; and ſo I did; and now, I no longer ſaw the wood, whereof the Croſſe was made, but only theſe pretious Stones; and yet ſo, as that no other ſaw them, but my ſelf.

When * they beganne to command me, to make theſe tryals, or proofes, and to vſe reſiſtance to thoſe Fauours, they grew on, to a higher encreaſe; for, though I might haue a minde to diuert my ſelf, yet I neuer was out of Prayer; nay, me thinkes, I was in Prayer, euen whilſt I ſlept; for heer, all was growing-on, and growing-vp, in the loue of our Bleſſed Lord; and the making alſo of a pittifull kind of complaints, which I vttered to him; and my not being able to endure it; nor was it in my power (though I had deſired it; and leaſt of all, when I procured it) to giue ouer, my thinking vpon him. But yet ſtill, I obeyed them, as well, as I could; though yet I were able to doe little, or nothing therein. Now, our Lord did neuer free me, from obeying them; but, howſoeuer it be true, that he commanded me, to doe as they bad me, he yet gaue me aſſurance otherwiſe, yea and inſtructed me alſo, about what I ſhould

* *The more she vvas diſcounte-nanced, euen by good men, ſo much the more highly vvas she fauoured by our Lord.*

ſhould ſay to them; and the ſame he doth alſo, to this day; and he taught me ſo concluding reaſons, of all things, that they gaue me all ſufficient aſſurance. And now his Diuine Maieſtie hath begunne, very lately, to performe, what he had been pleaſed to promiſe me before; as namely, to aſſure me yet better, that it was he; for there grew in me, ſo great a loue of Almightie God, that I knew not, how it could get into my hart; and it was of a very Supernaturall kind; nor was it I, who procured it. I then found my ſelf, euen as it were, to dye, through a deſire, wherein I was, to ſee Almightie God; nor could I come to know, how I might be able, to ſeeke-out this kind of life, but by the way of death. There came vpon me ſo great impetuoſities, or impulſes of this loue, that, howſoeuer they were not ſo inſupportable, nor yet altogeather of ſo high value, as thoſe others were, which I related before, yet knew I not, what to doe with my ſelf; for, nothing could now giue me ſatisfaction; nor was I able, euen to containe my verie ſelf; but really, it was with me, as if my Soule had been directly torne out of my Bodie.

O moſt admirable kind of artifice of our Lord! what manner of choice, and delicate induſtrie, is that, which thou art pleaſed to vſe towards this miſerable Slaue of thine? For, thou didſt hide thy ſelf from me; and yet withall, didſt euen then, preſſe vpon me, ſo very cloſe, with thy loue, by giuing me ſuch a delightfull, and ſauou-

ric

rie kind of death, as that the Soule, by her good will, would neuer be deliuered, from the ſame. Whoſoeuer hath neuer tryed, and felt, theſe ſo great impetuoſities of Diuine Loue, it is impoſſible, that he ſhould be able, to vnderſtand them; for, this is not a kind of reſtleſnes of the breaſt, or hart, nor anie of that kind of deuotions, which are wont ſometimes, as it were, to ſtop the breath; in ſuch ſort, as that the Soule is not able to containe her ſelf; But, this is an inferiour kind of Prayer, to that; and heerin we are to procure, to remoue ſuch kind of promptitudes, and vehemences, as thoſe; and to endeauour, to retire them ſweetly, into themſelues; ſo to appeaſe, and calme the Soule. For, this * is, in ſome ſort, as when little Children cry, and ſobb ſometimes, ſo thick, as that they are euen readie to choake; and when the Nurſe giues them drinke, that exceſſe of their paſſion, and expreſſion, beginnes to ceaſe. And ſo in this caſe alſo, is Reaſon to take the bridle into the hand; for perhaps, the verie naturall condition, and conſtitution of the perſon himſelf, may be the thing, which contributes ſomewhat, to this ſtate of minde, at that time. And therefore, let conſideration be vſed, for feare leaſt all ſhould not be perfect; and leaſt a very great part thereof, fall out to haue ſomewhat of the Senſuall, in it; and let this Child be ſtilled, by ſome Regalo, or other, of Loue, which may induce it, to exerciſe, and expreſſe the loue it ſelf, which he alſo beares, by a more gentle, and ſweet kind of way; and

* *A rare Compariſon.*

not

not thus, as it were, by going to cuffes. But let them goe retiring that verie loue of theirs, into the more inward part of the Minde; and not suffer it to passe on, and out, so farre, like some Pott, *which doth first, so boile vp, and then, so boile-ouer, as that the broth, or water, is quite spent, and lost, because no discretion was vsed, in the quantitie of wood, or coales, which was put vnder it. And thus, let them procure, to appease, and slake the flame, which is fed by that vehement fire, with sweet, and gentle teares, but not with such, as are forced, or painefull, as they are wont to be, which proceed from such a vehement kind of sense, as I haue formerly expressed; for, such are wont to be of very great inconuenience, to the Partie. My self vsed to haue such as these, in my beginnings; and they would euer leaue my head, in such disorder, and my Spirit, in such a wearines, and weaknes, that I was not able, sometimes for a day, yea and sometimes for more dayes then one, to returne to the exercise of Prayer. So that * we are to vse great discretion, in those beginnings of ours, to the end, that all may goe on, with much sweetnes; and that the Spirit may be taught the way of operating, and exercising it self inwardly; and we must diligently procure, that the exteriour may be auoided, as much as we can. But now, these other impetuosities, and impulses, are of a most different kind, and condition; for heer, it is not we, who bring in the wood; but, the fire seemes to be made already,

*Still, more & more excellent comparisons.

*An excellent, & most necessary Aduise.

already, to our hands; and instantly we are readie, to cast our selues into it, that so we may be wholy consumed. The Soule doth not heer procure, to make her self feele the wound, which growes to be made in her, by the absence of our Lord; but they driue sometimes, a sharp Arrow into the verie liuelieſt part of the hart; in such sort, as that the Soule her self, is not able to tell distinctly, either what she ayles, or euen what she desires; only she knowes very well, that she desires, and loues our Lord; and that the sayd Arrow seemes to be toucht, and rubbed-ouer with some bitter hearbe, or other, to make her euen hate her self, through the loue of this Lord, and to wish, with all her hart, that she might loose her verie life, for his sake.

It is * not in our power to expresse, and, much lesse, to relate with aduantage, the manner, how God approaches, and ariues to such a Soule, as this; or the excessiue paine, that he giues; which makes her not to know, euen what to doe, with her self. But yet, this verie paine, is such a sauourie kind of thing withall, that there is no delight in this whole world, which is able to giue her more gust. For, the Soule, as I was saying, would alwaies be very glad, if she might be euer dying, of this Disease. This paine, and glorie togeather, did carrie my Vnderstanding into such such distraction, and disorder, that I knew not, how they both, could possibly consist togeather. O what a thing it is, to see a Soule so wounded! for, it is

* *A strange mixture of affections, but such as God knowes how to giue.*

iuſt in ſuch ſort, as that one may very well affirme it, to be wounded; and that, for a moſt excellent cauſe; for now ſhe ſees very clearly, that ſhe her ſelf did contribute no part of the reaſon, why this Loue ſhould grow; but only it ſeemes, that ſome little Sparke fell downe vpon her, from that immenſe Loue of our Lord, which ſet her, ſo totally, on fire. O how often doe I remember that Verſe of *Dauid*, whenſoeuer I find my ſelf in this caſe? *Quemadmodum deſiderat ceruus ad fontes aquarum, ita deſiderat anima mea ad te, Deus meus*; *As the Hart deſires to plunge himſelf, into the Springs of vvater: ſo doth my Soule deſire thee, O my God.* For really; me thinkes, that this is euen litterally fulfilled then, vpon my ſelf. Whenſoeuer this comes not vpon me, with great violence, me thinkes, I can a little appeaſe my Soule; and at leaſt, ſhe is prouing to find ſome remedie. For, as for the performing of certaine Pennances, ſhe findes not almoſt, in that caſe, for what they ſerue; for, they all are felt by her no more, nor puts it her to anie more paine, to ſhed her bloud, then it would, if ſhe were directly dead. But, in that caſe, ſhe is in earneſt ſearch, after the finding-out ſome new wayes, or meanes, how ſhe may be able, to ſuffer much, for the loue of our Lord; but, ſo great is that other former * greif of minde, that I know not what Corporall torment can poſſibly be able to drowne it; for, the remedie thereof conſiſts not, in ſuch things, as theſe, ſince theſe medecines, are of too inferiour a kind,

* *This greife is after the rate of the loue.*

for

for the perfect cure of ſo deeply-rooted a Diſeaſe. We receaue, indeed, ſome little eaſe; and the affliction paſſes away, to ſome ſmall proportion, by this meanes, and by begging alſo the remedie of her miſerie, at the hands of our Bleſſed Lord; though yet, for her part, ſhe knowes not, how to find anie at all, but only, in death; for, by that meanes, ſhe hopes, entirely to enioy her Souerraigne Good. At other times, this paine falls vpon a Soule, ſo feircely, that neither this, nor anie thing els, can be done; for it peirces the whole bodie, through, and through; and neither can the hands, or feet be ſtirred; nay, if we chance to be on foot, and may happen ſometimes to ſit downe, we doe it, like a kind of tranſported Creatures; Nor can the Soule ſo much as breath, but only vtter certaine profound, lamenting ſighes, which yet are not great in ſhew, becauſe ſhe is not able to expreſſe them, though yet they be very great, in themſelues.

It pleaſed our Bleſſed Lord, that I ſhould haue ſometimes, this following Viſion. I ſaw an Angell very neer me, towards my left ſide, and he appeared to me, in a Corporeall forme; though yet I am not wont to ſee anie thing of that kind, but very rarely. For, though Angells be repreſented often to me, it is yet, without my ſeeing them, but only according to that other kind of Viſion, whereof I ſpake before. But, in this Viſion, our Lord was pleaſed, that I ſhould ſee this Angell, after this other manner. He was not great; but

rather little; yet withall, he was of very much beautie. His face was so inflamed, that he appeared to be of those most Superiour Angells, who seem to be, all in a fire; and he well might be of them, whome we call *Seraphins*; but as for me, they neuer tell me their names, or rankes; yet howsoeuer, I see thereby, that there is so great a difference in Heauen, between one Angell, and another, as I am no way able to expresse. I saw, that he had a long Dart of gold in his hand; and at the end of the iron below, me thought, there was a little fire; and I conceaued, that he thrust it, some seuerall times, through my verie Hart, after such a manner, as that it passed the verie inwards, of my Bowells; and when he drew it back, me thought, it carried away, as much, as it had touched within me; and left all that, which remained, wholy inflamed with a great loue of Almightie God. The paine of it, was so excessiue, that it forced me to vtter those groanes; and the suauitie, which that extremitie of paine gaue, was also so very excessiue, that there was no desiring at all, to be ridd of it; nor can the Soule then, receaue anie contentment at all, in lesse, then God Almightie himself.

This is no Corporall, but a Spirituall paine; though yet the Bodie doe not faile, to participate some part thereof; yea and that, not a little. And it is such a deare, delightfull kind of entercourse, which passes heer, betweene the Soule, and Almightie God, as I beseech him of his infinit goodnes,

nes, that he will giue some touch, or taſt of it, to whoſoeuer ſhall beleiue, that I lye. During the time, when I was in this ſtate, I went, vp, and downe that world, like an odd kind of tranſported Foole; neither cared I, either to ſee anie thing, or to ſpeake; but contented my ſelf to conſume, with burning-vp in my paine, which was to be the greateſt glorie for me, that this whole world could affoard.

In this ſtate was I, now, and then, when our Bleſſed Lord was pleaſed, that theſe ſo verie great Rapts, ſhould come vpon me, which I was not able ſometimes to reſiſt, euen when I was in preſence of Secular people; and ſo they grew to be publique; and this gaue mē a very great deale of trouble. But, ſince the time that I am growne to haue theſe Rapts, I feele not this paine ſo much as that other, whereof I ſpoke before; though yet I cannot call the Chapter to minde. But that paine, is different in manie kindes; and of more value alſo, then this; Or rather, when this beginnes, whereof I am ſpeaking in this place, it ſeemes, that our Lord doth rauiſh, and runne away, as it were, with the Soule, and put her into Extaſis, out of hand; and ſo, no roome is left, for the letting her feele anie paine, becauſe inſtantly, the time of enioying, comes in. Let him be Bleſſed for euer, who vouchſafes to impart ſo high Fauours, to a perſon, who correſponds with him ſo ill, for ſo great benefits.

THE THIRTIETH CHAPTER.

She returnes to recount the course of her Life; and how our Lord gaue remedie, to manie of her troubles, by bringing that holie man, Fray Pedro de Alcantara, *of the Order of the* Glorious S. Francis, *to the place, where she was. And she declares the great temptations, and inward troubles, which sometimes she endured.*

BVt now, when I came to obserue, the little, or nothing, which I was able to effect, towards the enduring, of those so great impulses, or impetuosities, whereof I was speaking, I grew to be in great feare of hauing them; for it was past anie power of mine, to vnderstand, how Paine, and Ioy, might be possibly able, to consist togeather. That, Corporall paine, and Spirituall ioy, could be compatible, I knew well, might be possible enough; but, that so excessiue a Spirituall paine, should be compatible with so excessiue a Spirituall gust, did put me half, as it were, out of my witts. And still I did not giue-ouer to procure, to resist the ariuall thereof; though yet I had so little power that way, that sometimes I grew wearie, euen of the endeauour. I defended my self, by the Crosse, and so procured to help my self, by that meanes, from him, who gaue vs all defence, and succour,

ſuccour, by the ſame Croſſe. I ſaw, that no Creature vnderſtood me; and this I vnderſtood very clearly, though yet I durſt not ſay ſo, to anie bodie, but my Ghoſtlie Father; for, that, indeed, might haue authoriſed them to ſay truly, that I wanted humilitie.

But our Bleſſed Lord was pleaſed to recouer me, from a great part of my trouble; yea and euen at that time, from it all, by bringing that bleſſed man, *Fray Pedro de Alcantara*, thither, of whome I made mention before, when I ſpake ſomewhat of his great Pennance. And now I alſo remember, that, amongſt other things, I haue been informed, that, for twentie yeares togeather, he had worne, vpon his bare Bodie, a certaine Garment of Lattin, in forme of a Haire Cloath. This man was the Authour of certaine little Treatiſes, concerning Prayer, written in Spaniſh; and they are now in the hands of manie. For he, as being a perſon, who had accuſtomed himſelf much, to that holie exerciſe, wrote very profitably thereof, for them, who liue in the Obſeruance of the Firſt Rule of the Bleſſed S Francis, according to the full rigour of the ſame. When therefore a certaine Widdow, of whome I ſpoke els where, (who was a great Seruant of Almightie God, and a particular freind of mine) came to know, that ſo great a man was there, with me; and knew alſo the great neceſſities, wherein I was, (as hauing been the witnes of my afflictions) and had comforted me, in ſeuerall occaſions, (for, her Faith was euer ſo great, that ſhe

could neuer, in fine, beleiue, but that it was the Spirit of Almightie God; which all the reſt, would needs haue to be the Diuel) and conſidering alſo, that ſhe was a perſon of very good vnderſtanding, and of great ſecrecie withall, and one, to whome our Lord vouchſafed to doe great Fauours in Prayer) his Diuine Maieſtie was pleaſed, to giue her knowledge of thoſe things, whereof they, who were Learned, were wholy ignorant. My Ghoſtlie Fathers then gaue me leaue, that I might eaſe my ſelf, in ſome things, with her; for ſhe was capable, manie wayes, to vnderſtand them; for ſometimes, it had come to her turne, to enioy euen ſome of thoſe verie Fauours, which our Lord had alſo vouchſafed to affoard me, togeather with certaine aduertiſments, which he had alſo giuen her, for the good of her Soule. But now, as ſoone as *Fray Pedro* came to know of my deſigne, he did (without ſaying anie thing to me) deſire, and get leaue of my Prouinciall, that I might remaine with her, in her Houſe, for a matter of ſome eight dayes; and ſo, both there, and in ſeuerall Churches, I ſpoke with him, diuerſe times, in that firſt occaſion of my being there; for I communicated my affaires with him alſo afterward, in ſundry occaſions, at which time I gaue him likewiſe account of my life, (though yet, but in a Summarie way) and of the manner of my proceeding in Prayer; and this, with the greateſt claritie, which I could poſſibly vſe; for, this propertie I euer had, to treat with all claritie, and truth, with them, to whome

whome I imparted my Soule; yea and I ſtill deſired, that euen the firſt motions of my hart, might be made knowne, to them; and as for ſuch things, as might be ſubiect anie way, to ſuſpition, or doubt, I ſtill was wont to argue them, * againſt my ſelf, with the ſtrongeſt reaſons, that I could bring. So that I imparted my Soule to this Father, without anie manner of duplicitie, or diſguiſe at all; and I found, that he vnderſtood me, almoſt euen at the verie firſt, by experience; which was indeed, the onlie thing, whereof I had need, at that time; for then, I could not giue my ſelf ſo well, to be vnderſtood, as now I can; at leaſt not ſo farre, as to expreſſe it home. For, ſince that time, it hath pleaſed our Lord, to enable me to vnderſtand, and to declare to me, the Fauours, which his Diuine Maieſtie doth me; but formerly, it was neceſſarie enough for me, to find a perſon, who had paſſed through the ſame things, by experience; if I would hope, that he ſhould perfectly vnderſtand me, and declare to me, what euerie thing was. Now, this Father gaue me very great light; for I could not, by anie meanes, vnderſtand, what that could be, which concerned thoſe Viſions, which were not Imaginarie, or repreſented by the Imagination; and me thought alſo, that I vnderſtood as little of thoſe others, which I ſaw with the onlie eyes of my Soule, for, as I haue ſayd before, thoſe only, which were viſible, by our Corporeall eyes, ſeemed to me, to be indeed, of importance; and of theſe, I had receaued none at all.

* *A very ſafe and vvyſe vvay of proceeding.*

But now, this holie man, gaue me light in all; and declared it to me; and required me, not to be troubled anie longer; but that I ſhould bleſſe, and praiſe Almightie God; and that I was to be very ſure, that theſe were true effects of his Spirit; and that, although it were no Article of Faith, yet nothing could be more certainly true, nor which I might more firmely beleiue. And he comforted himſelf very much, with me; and ſhewed me all courteſie, and fauour; and euer after, he had great care of me; and he communicated diuerſe of his affaires, and buſineſſes, with me. And finding, that I had the ſelf-ſame deſires of thoſe things, which he had already put in practiſe, (for indeed, in as much as concerned deſires, our Lord had giuen them to me, with great reſolution) and finding alſo, that I was ſo full of courage, in order to that end, he tooke particular contentment, to treat with me. For, whenſoeuer our Bleſſed Lord is pleaſed to bring one to this State, there is * no ioy, or comfort, which can be equall to the meeting with ſome ſuch other perſon, as to whome our Lord hath been pleaſed, to vouchſafe ſome beginning thereof; for then perhaps, I had not much more, then a beginning, by what I may be able to conceiue; And I beſeech our Bleſſed Lord, that I haue it yet. But as for him, he had extraordinarie compaſſion of me, and told me, that one of the verie greateſt afflictions of this life, was that, which I had endured; Namely, the oppoſition, and contradiction of good men; and that ſtill, I would be

* *This is a moſt certaine truth.*

be a little obnoxious, in the same kind; because I must euer be in need of help; and that he feared, there was no bodie in that Cittie, who would vnderstand me. But, that he would speake with my Ghostlie Father, & to one also of those others, who was wont to giue me most discomfort; which was, that married Cauallier, of whome I spoke before. For he, as being a person, who loued me, perhaps, more then the rest, did continually make warre vpon me; and he was a man of a tender, and holie Soule; and considering, how lately before, he had found how wicked I was, he knew not, how to make himself sure, that all was right.

But now, the holie man *Fray Pedro*, grew to talke with those two persons, afforesayd; and he shewed them causes, and reasons, why they should, both quiet, and assure themselues, and disturbe me no more. As for my Ghostlie Father, there was no very great need of much diligence; but as for the Cauallier, it suffised not for him, to heare what *Fray Pedro* sayd; though yet, it were a meanes, to keep him from frighting me, so very much, as he had done before. But then, we resolued togeather, that I should write to *Fray Pedro*, of all that, which might succeed to me afterward; and to recommend one another much, to Almightie God; for, so great was his humilitie, as to make some little account of the prayers of this miserable Creature; which gaue me confusion enough. But he left me, with extreame comfort, and gust, and directed me to proceed securely

on,

on, with my Prayer; and to make no doubt at all, but that it was of Almightie God; and that, whensoeuer I might be in anie doubt, for mine owne greater securitie, I should impart whatsoeuer occurred, to my Ghostlie Father; and that then, I should hold my self for safe. But yet, notwithstanding all this counsaile, I was not able, to be entirely secure; because our Lord was pleased, to guide me still, by the way of feare; which sometimes made me apt to doubt, that the Diuel had a hand in the busines, whensoeuer they would needs tell me, that it was so. And thus indeed, vpon the whole matter, no Creature was able to giue me, either so much securitie, or so much feare, as to make me yeild more credit to either of them, then our Lord was pleased to infuse into my Soule. So that, howsoeuer this holie man did helpe me, both to quiet, and comfort, yet did I not so entirely beleiue him, as to remaine without anie feare at all; especially, when our Lord came, sometimes, to leaue me in certaine troubles of minde, which I shall instantly relate; yet howsoeuer, (as I was saying,) my comfort was then much encreased. But I could not then satisfye my self, with giuing humble thankes enow, to Almightie God, and to that Glorious Father of mine, *S. Ioseph*, who (as I was apt to thinke) had brought *Fray Pedro* thither; for he was Commissarie Generall of the *Custodia of S. Ioseph*; to whome, as also to our B. Ladie, I vsed to recommend my self much.

Now

Now it had hapned to me formerly, ſometimes, (yea and ſo it doth alſo yet, though not ſo often) to find my ſelf in ſo exceſſiue troubles, and afflictions of Mind, togeather with feirce infirmities, afflictions, and torments of Bodie, that I knew not, which way to turne my ſelf. At other times, I haue been ſubiect to corporall miſeries, which were more greiuous; but yet, not finding my ſelf ſubiect then, to the ſenſe of ſuch ſorrowes of minde, as now I haue, I paſſed with much alacritie, through them all. But whenſoeuer they, of both kindes, came togeather, the miſerie of it was ſo great, as that it gaue me affliction enough. And as for thoſe great Fauours, which our Lord had been pleaſed to doe me, I then forgot them all; and there only remained but ſuch a kind of memorie of them, as of a thing which I had dreamt; and this ſerued but to giue me ſo much the more paine. For, the Vnderſtanding growes, in thoſe caſes, to be all obſcured, and dulled; in ſuch ſort, as that it made me enter into a thouſand ſuſpicions,* and doubts, as if I had not formerly vnderſtood things well; and that perhaps, I followed fancies, in ſtead of truths; and that it might haue been miſerie enough, for me, to be deceaued my ſelf, without ſeeking to abuſe, and coſen ſo manie good men; and I ſeemed to be ſo very wicked, that me thought, all the miſcheifs, and Hereſies, which had been raiſed, and brought lately into the world, were but the fruits of my Sinnes. But, this is a falſe kind of humilitie, which the

* *Heer followes a whole world of ſad temptations & troubles.*

the Diuel inuented of purpoſe, for my diſquiet, to try, if he could bring my Soule to deſpaire. And I know ſo well, by experience, that this is a trick of the Diuel, that now, when he findes, that I vnderſtand him, he torments me not ſo often heerin, as he was wont. The certaintie of this truth, is clearly found, by the reſtleſnes, and diſquiet, wherewith he beginnes; and by the buſsling, which he keepes in the Soule, all the while it laſts; and by the obſcuritie, and affliction, which he brings to it; and by the drynes, and indiſpoſition to Prayer, which he leaues after it; and, in fine, becauſe it produces no good effect at all; for he ſeemes euen to ſtifle the Soule, and to bind euen the Bodie alſo vp, that ſo it may be good for nothing; whereas, by true Humilitie, though the Soule know it ſelf to be wicked, and is in paine, to conſider what we are; and makes vs hold our Sinnes to be as great, and as greatly to be exaggerated, as hath been ſayd; and that they are felt indeed to be ſuch; yet comes not this kind of ſenſe, with anie tumultuous diſorder; nor doth it diſturbe, and vex the Soule, nor obſcure her, nor giue drynes to her; but rather it regales her, and behaues it ſelf in a very contrarie way; with gentlenes, with ſuauitie, and with Light. She* is troubled in ſome ſort, on the one ſide, euen for that ſhe is comforted, to ſee, how great Fauour our Lord imparts to her, in letting her feele that paine; and to conſider, how well employed it is; and the ſorrowes, for whatſoeuer ſhe hath done, againſt

* *The differẽce betweẽ Diuine, and Diabolicall greife of minde.*

againſt Almightie God; But yet, on the other ſide, ſhe exalts, and admires his mercie; ſhe hath light, wherewith to put her ſelf to confuſion; and to praiſe his Diuine Maieſtie, for vouchſafing to endure her ſo long. But in that other kind of Humilitie, which the Diuel brings, there is no light, for anie thing, which is good; but it ſeemes, as if God were readie, to put all the world, to fire, and ſword. The Diuel repreſents the Diuine Iuſtice to the Soule; and though he permit her to beleiue, that God hath mercie, (for the Diuel hath no ſuch power, as to deſtroy her Faith) yet hath ſhe euen that, in ſuch ſort, that it is no comfort to her, at all; but rather, when ſhe beholds God's great mercie, he makes it ſerue her, for ſo much the greater torment, becauſe ſhe ſeems to haue been obliged thereby, to haue ſerued Almightie God, ſo much the more.

This is an inuention of the Diuel, and that of the moſt painefull, and ſubtile, and diſguiſed, that I haue euer found; and therefore I would wiſh your Reuerence (if perhaps, he may procure to tempt you heerafter, in this kind) to looke vpon it, with a Light in your hand, and to procure to know him well, if he leaue you vnderſtanding enough, for doing it. And beleiue not heer, that Knowledge, and Learning will ſerue the turne; for though I be in want enough of all that, yet now, when I am gotten out of his reach, I am growne to vnderſtand very well, that all his diſcourſe, is but fooleric; And that, which I vnder-

ſtand

ſtand alſo, is, that ſometimes our Bleſſed Lord is pleaſed to giue way, and permit it; and he allowes him leaue, to doe this, as he did, that he might try, and tempt *Iob*; though, becauſe I am ſo wicked, he permits not, that it be done to me, with ſo much rigour.

It hapned to me once, (and I remember very well, that it was vpon the day, before *Corpus-Chriſti Eue*, (a Feſtiuitie, to which I am deuoted, though yet, not ſo much, as were fitt) and at that time, it laſted with me but one day, but at other times, for a weeke, and a Forthnight, yea and ſometimes, three weekes, and peraduenture more, and eſpecially in the Holie Weekes, which were wont to be my Regalo, in point of Prayer) that me thought, he * catched-vp, and euen carried-away my Vnderſtanding, at an inſtant, for certaine things ſometimes, ſo very triuiall, and light, that, at other times, I would but haue laughed at him, for his paines; and then he makes her ſtoope, to whatſoeuer he liſts; and the Soule remaines, as it were, nayled to the place, without being Miſtreſſe of her ſelf, or being able to thinke of anie thing, but thoſe impertinent fooleries, which the temptation repreſents; and indeed, they haue no ſubſtance at all; nor doe they either bind, or looſe, but ſerue only to choake the Soule, in ſuch ſort, as not to ſuffer her to ſubſiſt, in her ſelf. And really, it is true, that it hath hapned to me ſometimes, to conceaue, that the Diuells goe playing with a Soule, as men would doe with a Ball;

* *The vvay & manner of a great deſolation.*

Ball; and she, the while, is without anie meanes at all, to deliuer her self, out of their power. Nor can it be expressed, in what a deale of sufferance she is, by this meanes. She walkes in search of some defence; and Almightie God permits, that she may find none. She only, and euer remaines, with the Facultie, and Power of her Free-Will; though yet, not faire, and cleare, but as if a man had eyes, which were shut; or as if some person, who had gone very often, by anie way, and so, though it were night, and darke, yet, by the markes, which he had formerly taken, knowes where he may be in danger to stumble; because formerly he had seen the same pathes, by day, and so, he secures himself from that danger. In like manner, doth it occurr to the Soule, which now seemes, but meerly by custome, not to offend Almightie God; for, I speake not heer, of that protection, which our Lord affords her, though yet, that be the thing, which imports most. But, in the meane time, our Faith is deaded; or at least, layd asleep; as the other vertues also are, in such times, as those; though yet, they be not vtterly lost; for, she well beleiues, euen then, that Doctrine, which the Church teaches; and she pronounces it also with her mouth; whereas yet, on the other side, the Diuel doth so presse, and dull this Faith, that she seemes to haue but such a kind of knowledge of God, as men haue a notice of things, which are spoken of, in their hearing; but yet, from very farre off. Her Loue also, is so

very Luke-warme, that, if she chance to heare Almightie God spoken of, she harkens in such a kind, as to beleiue indeed, that he is that, which he is, because the Church declares it; but yet, she hath vtterly lost all memorie, of whatsoeuer she hath experimented of him, in her self. For her, to goe and pray, and remaine in Solitude, is but to encrease her affliction; for, the torment, which she feeles in her self (and yet, without knowing very well, why) is an vnsupportable thing, in my opinion; and indeed, it is a kind of picture, in little, or rather a patterne of Hell. And this is most certainly so; as our Lord himself was pleased to giue me to vnderstand, once, in a certaine Vision. For heer, the Soule doth euen burne her self vp, of her self, without her knowing, either by whome, or by what way, she is set on fire; or yet, how to escape from thence; or finally, how to quench it; for, as for seeking to help her self by reading, she will be able to profit by it, no more, then if she could not read at all.

It hapned to me, one day, to reade the Life of a Saint, so to see, if I could swallow the iuyce, and substance thereof; and thus to comfort my self, with the consideration of what he had suffered; and so, I read half a dozen lines of it, foure or fiue times ouer; and yet, though all were written in mine owne Mother-Toung, I vnderstood them lesse, in the end, then I did in the beginning; and so I gaue it ouer. This hapned to me manie times; but I more particularly remember this one.

To

To apply ones-self to conuersation, in such times as these, is yet worse; for, the Diuel fills vs then, with such an vntoward, and harsh kind of spirit of anger, that it seemes to me, that I could euen eate folkes vp, since I can doe nothing els; yea and me thinkes, I acquitt my self well, in that I forbeare to doe it; and that God also shewes him, who is in this case, a particular Fauour, in preseruing him from doing, or saying somewhat, against his Neighbour, whereby he might preiudice him, and offend Almightie God.

And now, as for going to my Ghostlie Father, at such times; it is certaine, which I shall heer relate; and it hath hapned to me, very often; That, notwithstanding they were some great Saints, with whome I haue dealt, and yet deale; they vttered such harsh words, and chidd me after so sharpe a manner, that, when afterward, I would take occasion to repeate them, in their owne hearing, themselues would be euen amazed, at themselues; and they told me, it was no longer in their power, to doe otherwise. For, though they fully resolued within themselues, not to doe it; and at other times, that they had not only compassion of me, but euen a kind of scruple also, in themselues, to treat me thus, when I was so full of affliction, both in Bodie, and Minde; and though they had euen resolued, to comfort me, with much compassion, and pittie, yet, in fine, they were not able, to doe it. Not yet, that they gaue me ill language, in such sort, as to offend

Almightie God, by it, but they would vse words, as full of disgust, as could possibly be heard, from Ghostlie Fathers. But belike, they intended to mortifye me; which though at other times, I could passe ouer, or at least, endure, yet then, it grew all, to be a torment.

But yet sometimes, I came also to be of opinion, that euen I had deceaued them; yea and my self would goe to them, and aduise them, in very great good earnest, that they should take heed of me, least I deceaued them. Not, but that I knew well enough, that I would not doe it, on set purpose, and vpon designe, nor tell them, by ame meanes, anie lye; but the truth is, I was affrayd of all things. There was one, who hearing of this temptation of mine, aduised me, not to be troubled at it; for, *though I should haue a minde to cosen him, yet he had witt enough, to defend himself, from me.

*A pretty humour.

That, which sometimes gaue me great comfort, and, as it were, constantly, or, at least, most ordinarily, was, that I vsed to haue some kind of respit, after I had Communicated; yea and sometimes, euen in approaching to the Blessed Sacrament, at the verie instant, I should grow so very perfectly well, both in Bodie, and Soule, that it did euen amaze me. For, it seemed, to be no other thing, then that all the darknesses of my Soule, were dispersed, and discharged at an instant; and that, vpon the approach of the Sunne, I quickly came to discerne those fooleries, wherein

wherein I had found my self, all that while.

At other times, by the hearing of some one word, which our Lord was pleased to say to me, and with only expressing himself thus; *Be not afflicted; and be not afrayd*, as formerly I haue related, I remained most perfectly well; and sometimes, by seeing some Vision, I became, as if I had neuer felt anie inconuenience. And in those cases, I would be entertaining, and regaling my self, with Almightie God; and would, euen kindly complaine to him, against himself, for permitting me to suffer so great torments; though yet I must confesse, that he had first meant, to make me very good amends; because, these difficulties, did neuer vse to ariue, but after a great abundance of Fauours. And me thinkes, he ordaines things so, to the end, that the Soule may appeare like gold, which comes refined, and pure, out of the Crusible; and that so, she may see our Lord, in her self; and then, doe those troubles, which ariue, grow to be accounted little, though they seem insupportable, at the time. And we desire, that we may returne againe, to suffer, if our Lord may be serued the better, by it; yea and to admit also of more tribulations, and persecutions; Prouided alwayes, that they may happen, without offence of our Lord. Nay, we rather will reioyce in suffering for him; for, all will, in the end, bring more profit; though yet, for my part, I could neuer beare them, as I ought, but rather with abundance of imperfection. At other times, these troubles

would come vpon me, in other kindes; and so, as that me thinkes, it is absolutly a kind of impossible thing, for me to thinke then, of anie thing, which is good; yea or so much, as to desire, to doe anie such thing; for that I haue both a Bodie, and a Soule, which is absolutly vntoward, and good for nothing. But at those times, I am not subiect to those other temptations, and disquiets, but only to a disgust in all things, though I know not, why; so that nothing can giue contentment to my Soule. And then I would be sometimes procuring, to diuert, and employ my self, vpon the performing of some good workes, in the exteriour way; and I would doe so, euen half, whether my self would, or no. But, in fine, I am come, at length, to know, by such meanes as these, how very little anie Soule is worth, whensoeuer the grace of Almightie God, is hidden from her. And this kind of consideration, vsed not to put me to anie trouble at all; for, the beholding mine owne basenes, after this manner, was wont to giue me a kind of satisfaction.

At other times, I find my self so, as that I am vtterly vnable, to frame anie distinct, or formed conceipt of Almightie God; nor indeed of anie good thing, after a stayd manner. Nor am I able then, to put my self in Prayer, though I be neuer so much alone; though yet, I feele still, that I know there is a God; and I find also, that it is my Imagination, and my Vnderstanding, which doe me so much hurt, in these occasions, and cases; for,

for, as for my Will, me thinkes, it ſtands right in me, and that it is diſpoſed to all goodnes. But this Vnderſtanding of mine, is ſo entirely loſt, that it ſeemes to be no other thing, then ſome furious, and madd kind of Foole, whome no bodie is able to bind; nor am I ſo farre Miſtreſſe thereof, as that I can make it quiet, for one *Credo*.

Sometimes I fall on laughing; and yet then, doe I know my miſerie, and ſtand looking vpon my Soule, and permit her to doe, what ſhe will; and yet, our Lord be thanked, ſhe neuer, by anie meanes, applyes her ſelf to anie thing, which is ill, but only about things, which are indifferent, if there be anie thing, which may occurr, to be done, either heer, or there, or anie where els. But thus, I come to know better, the incomparable mercie, which our Lord is pleaſed to ſhew me, vpon his tying-vp this madd foole, when we are in perfect contemplation. And heer, I conſider, what would become of me, if ſuch perſons as hold me now for good, could diſcerne me, to haue theſe idleneſſes, and impertinencies, which I haue deſcribed heer.

But now, I haue very great compaſſion of a Soule, to find her, in ſo ill companie, as this. I would faine ſee her rather, in libertie; and I expreſſe my ſelf, in this manner, to our Bleſſed Lord: When, O my God, ſhall I ariue, to ſee my Soule, all conioyned, and vnited togeather, in celebrating thy praiſe; that ſo, all the Powers thereof, may admire thee? Permit not heerafter, O Lord,

that she wander, vp, and downe, by peices; for now it seemes no otherwise, then as if euerie one of the same Powers, were running, vp, and downe, in a seuerall way. These things passe thus, very often; and I vnderstand also very well, that sometimes, the little corporall health I haue, contributes much, to these inconueniences. I also reflect much, by these occasions, vpon the hurt, which the Sinne of our First Parent, hath done vs; for, me thinkes, it is growne from thence, that we are incapable to enioy so great a good; and mine owne sinnes, are a great part of the cause; for certainly, if I had not committed so manie, I should haue remained more entire, and free, towards the doing of good.

I was subiect also, by times, to another very great inconuenience; for, conceauing that I vnderstood all the Bookes, that treat of Prayer, which I came to read, and that already, our Blessed Lord had done me some such kind of fauour, as that I needed them not; for this reason, I did not read them, but applyed my self to read the Liues of Saints. And finding my self also very short, in that, wherein they had so heroically serued Almightie God, this seemed to doe me good, and giue me strength; but yet, me thought, this was a signe of little humilitie, for me to thinke, that I was already ariued, to hold that degree of Prayer. And not being able, to quiet my self otherwise, I continued much in paine, till certaine learned men, and particularly, that blessed Creature,

ture, *Fray pedro de Alcantara*, declared to me, that I was not, to be troubled at that.

I am not ignorant, that in the ſeruing of Almightie God, I haue not yet ſo much as begunne; though yet, the way, which his Diuine Maieſtie hath held, in doing me Fauours, is the ſame, which he hath vſed towards ſuch, as are good; whereas, for my part, I am no more, then a direct downeright meer imperfection, vnleſſe it be, in my deſires, to loue him; for, in this, indeed, I ſee well, that our Lord hath done me Fauour, that ſo I may performe ſome little thing, for him. I confeſſe, me thinkes, I loue him; but my actions, and the manie imperfections, which I diſcerne therein, giue me great diſcomfort.

At other times, my Soule falls into a kind of Foolerie; for ſo it is, when, me thinkes, I doe neither good, nor ill, but follow on, after the walke of others folkes; and this, neither with paine, nor glorie; nor with thought of life, or death, nor guſt, nor trouble; yea, me thinkes, ſhe feeles nothing at all, but rather ſeemes to me, to walke on, like ſome little Aſſe, who feeds, and ſuſtaines himſelf, becauſe they giue him ſomewhat to eate; and he eates, almoſt without thinking, what he is doing. For, the Soule, when ſhe is in this ſtate, is not likely to be without feeding, vpon ſome great Fauours of Almightie God, ſince ſhe is not troubled, with liuing in ſo miſerable a life, as this, but paſſes through it, with patience, and equalitie of minde; but yet, theſe motions, and effects, are not

found by her, in ſuch ſort, as that the Soule is made to vnderſtand her ſelf by them.

It ſeemes now alſo to me, to be, as when men ſaile at Sea, by the breath of a ſweet, and gentle Winde; for then, we ridd much way, though we ſcarce know how; Whereas, in thoſe other conditions, the effects are ſo very great, that the Soule doth almoſt inſtantly diſcerne her owne improuement; for inſtantly doe her deſires boile vp, and the Soule can neuer ſatisfye her ſelf; but they, to whome Almightie God imparts ſuch impetuoſities of Loue, doe find ſuch operations, as theſe. This is like certaine little Springs, which I haue obſerued to riſe, and where the Sand neuer ceaſes to moue vpwards. And this example, and compariſon of Soules, which be ariued to this ſtate, ſeemes very naturall to me. For, Loue will be euer boyling vpward, and conſidering, and deuiſing, about what it may be able to doe; and can, by no meanes, be contained in it ſelf; as it ſeemes, the water, whereof I ſpake, is not able to continue in the earth, which ſtill is caſting it vp, from thence. And iuſt ſo, is it very vſuall for the Soule, not to be at quiet, or in contentment with her ſelf, through the loue ſhe beares to Almightie God; but ſhe is ſo bathed, and ſoaked, and filled with it, that ſhe wiſhes, that others would drinke too, (ſince, for her part, ſhe cannot want) that ſo they might aſſiſt her, to ſing the praiſes of Almightie God.

O how often doe I call to minde, that liuing Water,

Water, whereof our Lord ſpake to the Samaritan; as, indeed, I am very much deuoted to that Ghoſpell. And really, it is moſt true, that I was ſo, euen from my childhood, though I did not then, vnderſtand this benefit, as now I doe; but I often beſought our Lord, to beſtow of this Water vpon me; and alwaies, I had the Image, or Figure of it, at hand, with this Motto, or Word of hers, when he was ſo neer the Well: *Domine da mihi hanc aquam*; *O Lord, beſtovv this vvater vpon me.* It ſeemes alſo to me, that as a Fire which is very great, needs matter vpon which to worke, to the end that it may not be extinguiſhed: So alſo for thoſe Soules, whereof I ſpeake, it is neceſſary that they be bringing wood, how deare ſoeuer it may coſt them; to the end, that this fire may not goe out. For my part, I am ſo miſerable a Creature, that I would be content, if I had but ſtrawes, to caſt in.

And ſo it happens to me ſometimes, yea and very often, that, one while I would be laughing, and at other times, much afflicted. For, a certaine interiour motion, and impulſe, which I haue, is euer inciting me, to ſerue God, in ſomewhat; and (ſince I am not fitt for greater matters) to doe it, by gathering Flowers, and making Poſies, and applying them, in decent manner, to holie Images, and Pictures; to ſweep, or dreſſe-vp ſome Oratorie; or in doing ſuch other little, and poore things, as gaue me confuſion, to ſee, that they were no greater. And ſo alſo, if I chanced to doe anie

anie Pennance, it was all, so very little, and so poorely done, that vnlesse our Lord should vouchsafe to accept the Desire, for the Deed, I saw plainely, that I was good for nothing; and, in a word, I did euen laugh at my self.

But now, it giues no small trouble, to such Soules, as it pleases Almightie God, through his goodnes, to endue, with the fire of his Loue, in great abundance, if they be in want of corporall health, and strength, whereby they may be able, to doe somewhat for him; since this giues a very great paine. For, in regard that we want strength, to carrie still, more and more wood, to this fire, (and such Soules doe euen dye, for the feare they haue, least the Fire should goe out) it seemes to me, that she doth euen consume, and burne her self vp, into ashes; or els, euen dissolue her self into teares, and so breath her selfe away, into nothing; and this is a strong kind of torment, though it leaue not, to be sauourie withall. Let such a Soule, as this, giue great thankes to Almightie God, if she haue ariued to this * state; and if our Lord haue giuen her person, corporall strength, to doe pennance; or if he haue imparted Learning, and talents, and power, to Preach, and heare Confessions, and winne Soules to Almightie God. For she knowes not, nor vnderstands not the great benefit, which is possessed by her, vnlesse she be growne so farre, as to feele the affliction which it brings, to be euer receauing much, at the hands of our Lord, and neuer to be able withall,

* *A happy State.*

withall, to be doing his Diuine Maieſtie anie Seruice. Let him be euer Bleſſed for all; and let the Angells giue him glorie, Amen.

I know not, whether I doe well, to be writing of ſo manie little things; but ſince your Reuerence hath commanded me yet againe, not to eſteem it anie trouble to enlarge my ſelf, and that I muſt be ſure to omit nothing, I therefore goe diſcourſing with clearnes, and with truth, of as much as I can call to mind. And it is impoſſible, but that I ſhould omitt manie things; for els, it would grow to coſt me much more time, whereof I haue very little, as I haue ſayd; and then, when all were done, it would perhaps, be of no benefit at all.

THE ONE AND THIRTIETH CHAPTER.

She treats of certaine exteriour temptations, and repreſentations of the Diuel; and of the torments, vvhich he gaue her. She ſpeakes alſo of other things, vvhich are very fitt, for the aduiſe, and inſtruction of ſuch perſons, as are vvalking on, in the vvay of Perfection.

* *She makes a long Diſcourſe of the Diabolicall Temptations, & troubles, to vvhich she vvas ſubiect.*

AS I haue ſpoken of ſome interiour, and ſecret temptations, and diſturbances, which the Diuel brought vpon * me: So now will I ſpeake of ſome others, which, in effect, were publique, and

and wherein I could not be ignorant, but that it was he. I was once in a certaine Oratorie, and he appeared to me, on my left side, in an abominable kind of figure; and in particular, I obserued his mouth, becauſe he was ſpeaking to me; and it was of a moſt vglie forme. It ſeemed to me, that a huge flame, came out of his bodie; and it was all, a very bright one, without anie obſcuritie at all. He told me, after a moſt hideous manner, that howſoeuer I had freed my ſelf once, out of his hands, he would yet find meanes enow, to fetch me back againe. I was in a mightie feare, but I bleſſed my ſelf, as well as I could; and ſo he vaniſhed away; but yet he inſtantly returned; and this hapned to me, two ſeuerall times; Nor did I know, in the world, what to doe; only I had Holie-water, neer at hand; and ſo I ſprinkled it towards the part, where he was; and he neuer returned to me, anie more.

Another time, he was ſome fiue howers togeather, tormenting me, with very terrible paine, and both exteriour, and interiour diſquiet; in ſuch ſort, that it was euen paſt enduring. The woemen, who were then at hand, were aſtoniſhed, to ſee, what paſſed; but neither could they tell, what to doe, nor I, how to ſerue my ſelf, of their helpe.

My cuſtome is, whenſoeuer anie corporall ſicknes, or paine, is very intollerable, to make certaine Acts within my ſelf, the beſt I can, beſeeching our Bleſſed Lord, that his Diuine Ma-

ieſtie,

ieſtie, will giue me patience; and that, if it ſhall redound to his Seruice, I may continue, to ſuffer ſo, euen till the very end of the world. And therefore now, when I found my ſelf put to ſuffer, with ſo much rigour, I applyed my ſelf to get help, by making ſome ſuch acts, as thoſe, and diuerſe good purpoſes alſo; that ſo, I might beare the burthen, the better. And our Lord was pleaſed then, that I ſhould clearly vnderſtand it, to be the Diuel; for I ſaw a certaine little abominable Negro, or Black-More, hard by me, gnaſhing his teeth, euen like a deſpairing wretch; but yet, in fine, he loſt, by what he hoped to gaine; for, as ſoone as I ſaw him, I fell a laughing, and had no feare of him, at all; but there were ſome perſons by, who knew not, what to doe, in this caſe, nor how to procure anie remedie, for ſuch paine, as they ſaw me endure; the blowes being ſo great, which he made me giue my ſelf, both vpon my Armes, and my Head, and my whole Bodie; and I, not hauing anie power at all, to reſiſt him; yea and (which was worſe, then this) I was ſubiect to ſo great an inward kind of reſtleſnes, and diſquiet, as I could, by no meanes, appeaſe; no nor yet durſt I, ſo much as call for Holie-water, for feare of giuing them apprehenſion, who were there, and ſo, to make them know, what the matter was.

For my part, I haue found, by much experience, that there is not anie thing, from which, the Diuels doe ſo certainly fly, (and ſo, as to returne no more)

more) as from * Holie-Water. They fly also from the Crosse; but, in that case, they will presently, sometimes, returne againe. So that certainly, the vertue of Holie-water, is great; and for my part, my Soule finds a particular, and euident kind of comfort, when I take it; and really, and vsually, I feele such an ease, and pleasure in it, as I am not well able to expresse; for, it is an interiour delight, which comforts my whole Soule; and this is no meer imagination, or fancie, nor a thing, which hath hapned to me only once, but very often; and when I obserue it, with most attention, me thinkes, it is, as if a bodie, who were much troubled with heat, and thirst, should drinke a draught of very cold water, which should refresh him, euen to his harts desire. And heervpon, I also consider, that all those things, which be ordained by the Church, are of great importance, and moment; and it is matter euen of much Regalo to me, that those words, which the * Church vses, and sayes, should haue the power, to make Holie-water, become of so very different a condition, from such other, as is not hallowed by the Church. But, in the meane time, when my torment would not cease, I told them so, who were present, that so they might not laugh at me; and calling for Holie-water, they brought me some, and sprinkled me with it; but it did me no good. Vpon that, I sprinkled some, towards the place, where the ill Spirit was; and then he went instantly away; and I grew as instantly well, as if they had

** The excellency of Holy VVater.*

** A great, and iust consolation.*

had ſtroaked my hurt off from me, with their hands; ſaue that I found my ſelf as wearie, as if I had been cudgelled extreamly. But now, it did me a very great deale of good, to find, that when our Lord giues the Diuel leaue, he is able to doe ſuch a deale of miſcheif, to a Creature, both in Bodie, and Soule, euen when they are not his, or abſolutly, in his power; for then, what would he be able to doe, when they ſhould be wholy left, to his diſpoſing? This gaue me alſo, a very great deſire, to free my ſelf from ſo ill Companie, as that, of the Diuel, is.

At another time, and that was lately, the ſelf-ſame thing hapned to me, though yet, it laſted not long; but I was then alone; and then, I alſo called for Holie-Water; and two Religious Woemen, (who were very well worth the beleiuing, and would, by no meanes, be induced, to tell an vntruth,) came-in thither, after the Diuel was departed from thence, and declared, that they felt a filthie ſtinke, as of brimſtone. For my part, I ſmelt it not; but they ſay, it continued ſo long, that others might alſo perceiue it.

Another time, I was in the Quire; and I came into a very great depth of Recollection; and I went away, from thence, for feare, leaſt ſomewhat might be obſerued. But the Religious in the Quire, who were neer the place where I was, heard a noyſe of very great blowes, which were giuen; and, for my part, I alſo heard thoſe Spirits talke togeather, cloſe to me, as if they had been

agreeing about some busines of theirs, though I knew not, what, in particular, it was; for I found my selfe in such depth of Prayer, that I vnderstood them not, in expresse manner; neither yet, had I anie feare of them, at all.

But these things did ordinarily not ariue, but when some Soule, or other, did receiue benefit, vpon my perswasion, and aduise. And it is certaine, that a thing hapned to me once, which I shall now relate; and there are manie witnesses of it; &, in particular, my Ghostlie Father, to whome I Confesse my self now; for he saw it in a certaine Letter, without my telling him, who it was, that wrote it; though yet, he chanced to know it, otherwise. But the thing was this. There came once a certaine person to me, who had been in Mortall Sinne, about some two yeares, and a half; and he had committed one, which was of the most abominable, that euer I had heard of, in my whole life; and, during all that time, he neither Confessed, nor reformed himself, and yet he sayd Masse, all the while. And though he then, Confessed his other Sinnes, yet concerning that one, he was wont to aske himself, how it could be possible, that euer he should Confesse so fowle a thing; and yet he had a desire, to free himself from it, but knew not, in fine, how to effect it. For my part, I had great compassion of the man; and much greif, to see Almightie God so offended; and I promised him, to beseech our Lord, to giue him remedie; and that I would also entreat diuerse

others,

others, who were much more likelie to preuaile, then my self, to become suiters to his Diuine Maiestie, for him; and accordingly, I wrote to a certaine person, about it, this man letting me know, that he could conuey my letter. And it is certaine, that heervpon, he instantly Confessed his Sinnes; and Almightie God was pleased (at the instance of those many other holie persons, to whome the busines had been recommended) to extend his mercie, to this Soule; and my self also, as miserable as I am, did not faile, to sollicit it, the best I could. But the man wrote a Letter to me, declaring, that he was reformed, so farre, already, as that some good time had incurred, wherein he had returned no more, to that Sinne; but yet, that the torment was so great, by the temptation, which sollicited him that way, that he accounted himself, to be almost, as it were, in a kind of Hell; so extreamly was he put to suffer by it; and therefore, that I must help him still, with Almightie God. Vpon this, I recommended him againe to my Sisters, the Religious of our Monasterie; by meanes of whose prayers, it seemes, our Lord was pleased, to doe me this Fauour; for, they tooke the matter, very much to hart. This man, was a person, of whome, no one could guesse, who it was; and I humbly besought the Diuine Maiestie, to appease those torments, and temptations, to which he was subiect; and that those Diuels might be suffered to torment me, in his place; prouided alwayes, that I might not offend our Blessed Lord,

in anie thing, by it. And it is very certainly true, that ſhortly after this, I endured moſt greiuous torments, for the ſpace of a moneth. And theſe two particulars, which I haue now related, did happen then. But our Lord, in the meane time, was pleaſed, that they ſhould leaue, to afflict that perſon anie more; for ſo, men ſent me word, becauſe I had already ſignifyed to them, what had occurred to me, during that moneth. And as for him, his Soule got ſtrength daily; and he grew to be abſolutly free; nor could he ſatisfye himſelf, with giuing thankes, not only to our Bleſſed Lord, but euen alſo to me, as if I had done ſomewhat therein. But the truth is, that the opinion, which he had, that our Lord did ſometimes ſhew me Fauours, was of benefit to him; for he ſayd, that, whenſoeuer he found himſelf, to be much aſſaulted, and preſſed, he vſed to read my Letters, and that preſently therevpon, he ſhould find himſelf ridd of the temptation. He grew to be much amazed, to vnderſtand, of what I had ſuffered; and how alſo, himſelf came to be free; yea and euen I, came alſo to wonder at it; and certainly, I would haue ſuffered manie yeares, for the aduantage, and deliuerance of a Soule. Let our Lord be praiſed for all; for, the prayers of ſuch, as ſerue him well, can doe much; as, I beleiue, my Siſters doe, of this Houſe; but yet, becauſe I had been earneſt in procuring thoſe prayers, the Diuels would be more enraged againſt me, then againſt others; and our Lord alſo permitted that, for my Sinnes.

About

About this time alſo, I once thought, that the Diuells would euen haue ſtrangled me; & it was, by night. But as ſoone as I had cauſed Holie-water to be caſt vpon me, I ſaw a multitude of them runne away, as if they had been about to breake their necks, from ſome high rock. And it is ſo frequent, and familiar with me, to be tormented by theſe curſed wretches, and the feare, which now I haue of them, is growne to be ſo very little, (by ſeeing, that they are not ſo much as able to ſtirre, vnleſſe our Bleſſed Lord giue them leaue,) that although it might be of comfort to my ſelf, yet I ſhould not faile to wearie your Reuerence, if I related them. But euen that, which is ſayd already, may ſerue to ſhew, that anie true Seruants of Almightie God, may need to trouble themſelues litle, at theſe idle frights, and Bugg-beares, which the Diuels are wont to expoſe, that ſo, they may make vs feare them; and, in fine, let the world be ſure, that euerie time, when we make them ſee, that we deſpiſe them, they will remaine with ſo much the leſſe ſtrength, after it; and the Soule, as being a greater Princeſſe, then ſhe was before, will remaine with ſo much more power, and profit; as I will not ſtand heer, to relate, for feare of too much length.

But now I will only declare, what hapned to me once, vpon an All-Soules Day, at night; for, being, at that time, in the Oratorie, and hauing recited Matins, as alſo thoſe ſo vety deuout Prayers, which are at the end thereof, according

to the Breuiarie, the Diuel put himself vpon the Booke, to the end, that I might not finish the Prayer; but I blessed my self, with making the Signe of the Holie Crosse, and so he went presently away; but I beginning againe, he also returned; and I thinke it was no lesse, that the like hapned, then three times; and till I cast Holie-Water at him, I could not make an end of the busines. But then, I plainly saw, that some Soules went out of Purgatorie, at the instant, who, belike, wanted very little of their deliuerance; and perhaps, the Diuel meant to diuert it. It is seldome, that I haue seen the Diuel, in anie exact, and particular Forme, or Figure; but manie times, without Forme, as I did the Vision; for, a Bodie sees very clearly, that he is there, as I haue declared already; and I will now relate this also, because it amazes me very much.

Being one day, in a certaine Monasterie, and in the Quire, and vpon the Festiuitie of the Blessed Trinitie, I chanced to be in Rapt; and I saw a great contention, and strife, between Angells, and Diuells, yet not knowing, what that Vision might meane. But about some fifteen dayes before, it was heard, that a certaine great disagreement had hapned, between some persons, who were of Prayer, and manie others also, who were not so; & there came a great deale of harme to the place, where this occurred; for, the strife continued long; and it bred a very great deale of disquiet.

Another time, I saw a multitude of them, all round

round about me; but then, it seemed to me, that I was enuironed with a great kind of Light, which permitted them not to approach. And I vnderstood thereby, that our Lord kept them off, from coming neer me, in anie such sort, as to make me offend his Diuine Maiestie; and by that, which I had found sometimes in my self, I conceaued that it was a true Vision. The matter is, that I now vnderstand so very well, how little power they haue, whensoeuer I goe not against God, that, in effect, I doe not feare them at all; for, their strength is directly nothing, vnlesse they find the Soules, they set vpon, to be cowardlie, and yeilding to them; but then indeed, they shew their power.

In some of those former Temptations, me thought, they employed themselues, now, and then, vpon awaking, and reuiuing in me, the memorie of all the frailties, and vanities, of my former time; in such sort, as that I had good cause, to recommend my self much, to Almightie God; but this, put me to very much paine, by making it seem to me, that now, it was all, of the Diuel, since those thoughts of mine, returned; till such time, as my Ghostlie Father put me in quiet. For really, it seemed to me, that euen the first motions of ill thoughts, were not so much as to approach anie such person, as had receiued so great Fauours of our B. Lord.

At other times, it tormented me much, yea and euen it torments me still, to see, that men should

hold me, in so high account; and especially, that it should be done, by eminent persons; and that they shoud speake so much good of me. And in this, I haue suffered, and still suffer much; but I quickly cast my thoughts, vpon the Life of Christ our Lord, and his Saints; and, me thinkes, I walke in a way, which is very contrarie, to that of theirs; for they aspired to nothing, but to be subiect to iniuries, and contempt. And this makes me walke with such feare, as that I euen scarce dare hold vp my head; and would be glad, to get my selfe out of sight; which yet, I neuer desire; when I find my self subiect to persecutions; for then, my Soule carries her self like a great Ladie, whatsoeuer the Bodie may feele. I know not, how these things can stand; but yet they passe in such sort, that the Soule seemes then, to be as in her Kingdome; and that she treads, and tramples all things, vnder her feet. This occurred to me seuerall times, and the same continued long; and I thought, it was vertue, and humilitie, but now I see plainly enough, that it was a temptation; and a Dominican Father, a learned man, declared it to me, very well. When I conceaued, that these Fauours, which our B. Lord was pleased to doe me, would grow to be publiquely knowne, it was of so excessiue a torment to me, that it extreamly disquieted my Soule; and it came, at length, to that passe, that, whilst I was considering the same, I could more willingly haue been contented, to be buried quick, then that anie such thing should ariue.

ariue. And ſo, when I came to haue thoſe ſo great Recollections, and Rapts, as that it was not poſſible for me, to reſiſt them in publique, I remained ſo confounded with ſhame afterward, that I would haue been glad, not to appeare, where anie Creature, who knew me, might ſee me. And being once extreamly afflicted, vpon this account, I was asked by our Bleſſed Lord, what it was, whereof I was ſo much afrayd. For, * ſaith he, this cannot grow, but from one of theſe two occaſions; Namely, that either it is, becauſe they will murmure againſt you; Or els, for that they will praiſe, and magnifye me. Meaning, that they, who ſhould beleiue it, would praiſe him; and they, who ſhould not beleiue it, would condemne me; though yet, without anie fault at all, of mine. But he ſayd, that both thoſe things, would proue to be of aduantage to me; and that therefore I muſt no longer, be troubled at it. This quieted me very much then; and it alſo comforts me now, whenſoeuer I call it to minde.

* *A queſtion vnworthy of him that aske it.*

This temptation came on ſo farre, that it gaue me an inclination, to quitt this place, and to carrie my fortunes with me, to another Monaſterie, which was very much more encloſed, and ſhut vp, then that, wherein I was, for the preſent. And I liked it alſo the rather, for that I had heard it extreamly praiſed, manie wayes; and beſides, it was a Houſe, of mine owne Order; yea and alſo very farre off, from my former aboade. And it was a thing, which would haue comforted me much,

to remaine, where I were vtterly vnknowne; but my Ghoſtlie Father, would neuer permit it.

Theſe feares did much depriue me of Libertie of Spirit; but I came to vnderſtand afterward, that it was no good Humilitie, ſince it gaue me ſuch a deale of diſquiet. And our Lord, vpon that occaſion, taught me this truth, that, if, * *indeed*, I were reſolued, and aſſured, that nothing at all of mine, were good, but that it were all, of God, it would follow, that iuſt ſo, as I would not be ſorrie, to heare other perſons praiſed, but rather would be greatly comforted, and ioyed, that our Lord did ſhew himſelf in them: So neither would I be ſorrie, that his workes might be alſo ſeen, in me.

**This is a very great Truth; but the Accent muſt be put, vpon the vvord* Indeed.

I fell alſo, vpon another extreame; and it was, to beg of Almighty God (yea, and I made particular Prayer to this purpoſe) that, when by accidēt, anie perſon ſhould enter into good opinion of me, his Diuine Maieſtie would be pleaſed, to declare my Sinnes to him; to the end, that the man might ſee, how abſolutly without anie merit of mine, it pleaſed our B. Lord to doe me Fauours. And this, doe I euer much deſire, though my Ghoſtlie Father haue commanded me, * not to aske it. But hitherto, till very lately, if I chanced to ſee anie perſon, who thought extraordinarily well of me, I tooke the beſt meanes I could find, by ſome deuiſe, or other, to tell him my ſinnes; and thus I conceaued my ſelf, to find eaſe. But yet heerby, they haue put me into a kind of ſcruple, that this proceeded

** And though she should haue continued to aske it, I dare ſay our Lord vvould not haue graunted it.*

ceeded not in me, from humilitie; and that it rather grew from a temptation; in regard, that manie came to me, and I seemed, to haue cosened them all. But though it be very true that they are indeed deceaued, if they thought, that there was anie goodnes in me, yet had I no desire at all, to deceaue them; nor did I euer pretend anie such thing; but that our Blessed Lord might haue perhaps permitted it. And so, for the self-same reason, I would neuer haue imparted anie priuate accident of mine, which was no Sinne, euen to my verie Ghostlie Fathers themselues, vnlesse I had found it, to be wholy necessarie; for I should otherwise, haue had much scruple to doe it.

But now I see very well, that all these little feares, and troubles, & superfluities of ill-grounded Humilities, doe sauour very sufficiently, of imperfection, and proceed from the immortification of the Soule. For, to a Soule, which is well resigned, into the hands of Almightie God, it doth not import her a iott more, that they should speake well of her, then ill; if once she vnderstand well, and home, (forasmuch as God will giue her that grace) that she hath nothing at all, of her self; but let her confide in him, who imparts it, and she shall know, in time, why he discouers it. And, in the meane while, let her prepare her self, for persecution; for, it will most certainly ariue, in such an Age as this, vpon anie such person, as to whome our Lord will haue it knowne, that he doth her such Fauours as these. For,

** *A must certaine truth.*

For, vpon anie ſuch Soule as this, a thouſand watchfull eyes will be caſt; whereas there will not be one, vpon a whole thouſand of ſuch other Soules, as be of a contrarie making. And there is really much cauſe to feare this; and it ought to haue been my feare, that the other was * not Humilitie, but Puſillanimitie. For, a Soule, which Almightie God permits to be expoſed thus, to the ſight of the world, may expect to be a Martyr of the ſame world; for, if ſhe will not dye to it, ſhe ſhall dye, by it.

* *A vvriſe, & ſolid Truth.*

For my part, I really ſee nothing, in this thing, called World, which ſeemes good to me, except only, that it giues not way, that worthie, and good people, ſhould be permitted to doe ill, without being murmured at, for their labour; and by this meanes, they grow to perfect themſelues. But there is need of more fortitude, and courage, for a man, who is yet imperfect, to walke-on towards a way of perfection, then euen to be inſtantly, made a Martyr. For, Perfection is not ſo quickly gotten, vnleſſe it be by ſome ſuch perſon, as to whome our Bleſſed Lord may vouchſafe that Fauour, by way of a particular priuiledge. But the world diſcerning once, that a man beginnes to aſpire to doe well, will needs account him perfect, at an inſtant; and then will it preſently ſee anie fault in him, if he haue anie, though it be a thouſand leagues off. Yea and perhaps, that, which they hold to be a fault in him, ſhall indeed, be a vertue; and the other, who condemnes him, and

is

is wont, peraduenture, to doe the ſelf-ſame thing, by an impulſe of vice, will iudge ill, of it, in another. So that, according to his dictamen, that other man, ſhould neither eate, nor ſleepe, nor euen, as it were, draw his breath. And the more alſo they eſteem ſuch perſons, the more apt are they to forget, that, how perfect ſoeuer their Soules be, and how abſolutly ſoeuer they tread the whole world vnder their feet, yet ſtill, they are in the Bodie, and liue vpon Earth, and are ſubiect to the miſeries of their condition. And therefore ſtill I ſay, that there is need of a great deale of courage; becauſe, ſuch men haue a minde, that the poore Soule, which hath not yet begunne to walke, ſhould already fly. She hath not yet ouercome, and mortifyed her paſſions; and yet theſe men will needs expect, that ſhe ſhould remaine as entire, and firme, as they haue read of Saints themſelues, after they were confirmed in grace. The particulars, which occurr in this kind, are to giue a man cauſe to wonder; and withall, euen to afflict vs to the hart, to ſee ſo manie Soules turne back againe, which know not (poore Creatures, as they are) what ſhift to make for themſelues; and ſo, doe I beleiue, that mine had alſo done, if our Lord, with ſuch an abundance of mercie, had not diſpatched all that buſines, alone. For, till he, out of his owne goodnes, did ſo, your Reuerence will already haue ſeen, that, on my part, there was nothing at all, but only riſing, and falling, ouer and ouer. I would faine expreſſe this point,

point, home; for I beleiue, that manie Soules, grow to be abuſed, and deceiued, becauſe they haue a minde to fly, before Almightie God giue them wings.

I conceiue, that I haue formerly vſed this Compariſon; but it comes alſo very well in, heer; for I find, that manie Soules, are much afflicted, vpon this occaſion. As namely, when they beginne, with great deſires, and reſolutions, to goe forward in the way of vertue (and ſome doe euen giue-ouer all, for loue thereof, forasmuch as concernes exteriour things) and yet, ſee more aduantagious effects, and fruits of ſuch vertues, as our Lord hath infuſed into the Soules of others, who are more proficient, then into theirs; and that they cannot performe certaine things, which are ſet downe in thoſe Bookes, which are written of Prayer, and Contemplation, which men are aduiſed to vſe, ſo to make themſelues aſcend vp, the better, and the higher, to this dignitie. And, in fine, when they cannot inſtantly, obtaine theſe things, they diſcomfort, and afflict themſelues. As, for example, not to care a ſtraw, if anie bodie ſhould ſpeake ill of vs; but rather to take more contentment in it, then when they praiſe vs; To haue very little eſteeme of our honour; To be perfectly vntyed from the care of kindred, and friends; and not to deſire, to conuerſe with them, but rather to be wearie of their companie, vnleſſe they be perſons of Prayer; And manie other things of this kind, which muſt, in my opinion, come from

from the guift of Almightie God, becauſe I hold them for Supernaturall bleſſings, and very contrarie to our owne Naturall inclination. And therefore, let them not be afflicted, but put their truſt in our Lord; that ſo, what now they haue in deſire, his Diuine Maieſtie may be pleaſed, to giue them afterward, with effect, and fruit, by meanes of Prayer, and by their doing, on their part, what they can. For, it is a moſt neceſſarie thing, for this weake, and poore Nature of ours, to place a great confidence in our B. Lord; & not to put our ſelues out of hart, nor to thinke, but that, if we will proceed with courage, we ſhall be victorious; and, becauſe I haue much experience heerof, I will ſpeake a word or two, by way of aduiſe, to your Reuerence. For, you muſt not thinke (though it may appeare, as if it were true) that anie vertue is already gained, vnleſſe it be firſt compared, and experimented, by the Vice, which is contrarie to it. And we muſt alwaies remaine doubtfull, and ſuſpitious, and not caſt-off our cares, as long as we are the owners of our liues. For, our weakneſſes ſtick cloſe, and faſt to vs; vnleſſe (as I was ſaying before) the whole benefit be imparted to vs, by Diuine grace; to the end, that we may know, what all the things of this life, are worth; and that there is neuer anie ſuch thing, as can be tearmed all, but in companie of manie dangers.

It ſeemed to me, ſome few yeares agoe, that not only I was not inordinatly tyed, to the loue of

of anie of my kindred, but rather that I was wearie of them; and it is really very true, that there were times, when I would not so much as endure their conuersation. But yet afterward, there occurred a certaine busines of much importance, which obliged me to remaine, with a certaine Sister of mine, whome formerly I had loued, with very extraordinarie affection. And now, being come againe, to conuerse with her, we suited not so very well, with one another. For, though she were better, then I, yet being of a different condition from mine, in regard that she was married, the conuersation was not alwaies that, which I could haue wished; and therefore, I liked to be alone, as much as conueniently I might. But yet, after a while, I found, that her troubles, and affaires, brought me more resentment, and care, by much, then such others did, as belonged to anie Christian neighbour of mine, at large; and this gaue me some little disgust, against my self; for, so, in fine, I came to know, that I was not so very free, and vntyed, as I had formerly conceaued; and that moreouer, I was to haue auoided the occasion, to the end, that so, this vertue, which our Lord had begunne to giue me, might haue gotten strength; and I haue procured, through his Fauour, to proceed in this manner, euer since.

When our Lord beginnes to impart a vertue to a Soule, it is to be held in great account; and by no meanes, are we to expose it, to the danger of being lost. So is it in those things, which concerne repu-

reputation, and honour; and so also, in others. And your Reuerence may well beleiue, that not all they, and we, who esteem our selues, to be absolutly vntyed from all things, are yet so, indeed; and we haue need enough, not to be slack, or negligent heerin. For, whatsoeuer person there be, who feeles anie care at all, of anie one point of Honour, in himself, let him beleiue me, if he meane to profit in Spirit, that there is euer a certaine tye, at the end of it; and it is, by such a kind of chaine, as that there is no File in the world, but God, and Prayer, and very much endeauour, on our part, which will possibly be able, to deuide it; & it seemes to be so fast a knot, that I am amazed, to see the mischeif, which it brings.

Sometimes I see certaine persons, who seem to be euen Saints, by their workes; for, they doe so very manie, and so great ones, that the world doth euen admire them, and exclame, after this manner; Deare God! and how comes it to passe, that such a Soule as that, doth still inhabit the Earth? Is he not already, at the verie top of Perfection? What is this? And what can detaine such a man, from being a direct, and downe-right Saint, who doth so great things for God? But my answer to this question, is, That this man, hath yet, perhaps, some little consideration, & care of preseruing some point of Honour; for himself; yea, and the worst of this busines, is, that he will, by no meanes, beleiue, that, in verie deed, there is anie such thing. And that happens, because sometimes, the Diuel makes

him conceiue, that he is euen obliged, to haue a great care of it. Well; yet let them harken to mee, I beseech them; and * euen for the loue of our Blessed Lord, I begg of them, that they will beleiue this poore little miserable Ant, whome our Lord commands to speake; That, vnlesse they free themselues from this Caterpiller, though perhaps it may not destroy the whole Tree, because some other vertues doe still, peraduenture, remaine, yet euen all those verie vertues, will be worme-eaten; nor, will it euer be a beautifull Tree; nor will it either thriue, or prosper, in it self; no, nor yet so much as suffer such others to thriue, and prosper, as shall grow neer it; for, the fruit of Good-Example, which it can giue, will not be wholesome, or sound; nor last long. And I say, and say againe, that, when there is anie point of Honour to be maintained, how little soeuer that may be, it is like the Stopp of the Organ, whereof, when the Point, or Compasse, is in fault, the whole Musick is also then, in disorder. It is a vice, which is alwaies procuring hurt enough, to the Soule; but in the way of Prayer, it is the verie pestilence it self.

Exercise of Prayer, and loue of Honour, agree not vvell together.

For then, we are going to procure to ioyne our selues, by way of Vnion, with Almightie God; and we say, that we dispose our selues, to obserue, and follow the Councells of Christ our Lord, whome we find to be all loaden with iniuries, and false testimonies, against him; and yet we must, forsooth, be carefull, to hold vp our

our owne reputation, and honour, very right, and streight. But it is not possible, euer to arriue, at that iourneys end, without going by the same way, which he went. And our Blessed Lord comes approaching then, to a Soule, when we endeauour to concurr with him, and procure to depart, and descend, in manie things, from that, which is euen our right.

But now some perhaps will say, I know not wherein that should be; and I haue nothing of this kind, to offer vp, for his sake. Yet, for my part, I am apt to beleiue, that, whosoeuer hath indeed so generous a resolution, as this, his Diuine Maiestie, will ordaine him, so manie different wayes, for the gayning of this vertue, that perhaps, he would not wish, to haue had so manie. Let vs all therefore, put our hands to worke; for, I am able to tell you, that the Nothings, and poore Littlenesses, or some of them, at least, (which are those miserable Strawes, whereof I haue spoken, and which I cast into the fire; for, I am fitt for nothing els) are all admitted, and accepted, by our Blessed Lord; and let him be praised for euer.

Amongst the rest of my imperfections, I was subiect to this, for one. I had very little knowledge of the Breuiarie, and of all that, which was to be performed in the Quire; and this hapned, by my being so very careless, and giuen to vanities; and the while, I saw other Nouices, who were able to haue instructed me. Now, I forbore to aske them anie questions, for feare least they

ſhould know of my ignorance. But ſhortly after, a good example came before me (for, this mercie, is vſually vouchſafed, by Almightie God) and ſo, when he had a little opened mine eyes, I would then be content to aske, whatſoeuer I knew not moſt perfectly well, though for the moſt part, I knew it; and thus, both I loſt, forſooth, no honour, by the bargaine, and afterward, it ſeemed to me, that our Lord was pleaſed, to giue me a better memorie. I alſo knew the Singing part, very ill; and I was troubled, if I did not learne, what I was bidden; yet, not this, becauſe I failed, in what I ſhould haue performed, as in the preſence of our Lord (for, that had been vertue in me) but in regard, that there were ſo manie, who heard me; and thus, I was ſo diſordered, vpon the meer point of looking, forſooth, to mine honour, that really, I acquitted my ſelf much worſe, then I knew how to haue done, before. But afterward, I thought it fitter, to tell them plainely, that I could not doe that well, which, indeed, I could not doe. At the firſt, I had ſome difficultie alſo, euen in this; but afterward, I tooke contentment in doing it. And really, it is very true, that, when once a bodie beginnes not to care, that ſhe be knowne not to know a thing, ſhe ſhall performe it much better. And when this baſe, vglie Honour, is once put out of the way (this Honour, I meane, which euerie bodie places, where, and in what he will) by theſe Nothings, which are really Nothing (and I am ſure, I am No-

Nothing enough, whome such a Bable, could put to so much paine) I was able to doe those things, better; and thus, by performing such poore acts, and such miserable little things, as these, his Diuine Maiestie vouchsafes to giue them strength, and value, as hauing been performed, for his sake. He also helpes vs on, towards greater things; and so did it happen to me, in matters concerning Humilitie, by my seeing, that they all profited, except my self; for, I was neuer good, for anie thing. But only, when they went from the Quire, I would stay to fold-vp their Mantles; for it seemed no lesse to me, then that they were, as so many Angells themselues, who sung the praises of Almightie God; and still I vsed to doe it, till they came to heare of it; but then, I was not a little ashamed. For, my vertue did not ariue so farre, as to desire, that they might know of it; not yet, because I was humble, but only, that they might not laugh at me, for my labour, and for my being so absolutly good for nothing.

O my deare Lord; how meer a scorne, and shame is it, to see so great wickednes, as mine; and find me reckon-vp such poore, and paltrie little graines of sand, as these, which yet also, I raised not out of the earth, for thy honour, and seruice, but all was wrapt vp, in a thousand miseries; for, the water of thy Grace, had not yet sprung, and boyled-vp in mee, to make them rise. O thou, my deare Creatour, that I had something of worth, and substance, which I might recount,

and present to thee, amongst so manie sinnes of mine; since I am commanded, to relate those great Fauours, which I haue receaued from thee! It is true, O my Lord, and my God, that I know not, how this hart of mine, can endure it; nor how anie Creature, who shall euer reade this Storie, can faile to abhorre me, when he sees such immense Fauours, as thine, so ill acknowledged, and thy self, so ill serued, for them; and that I am no more ashamed, to relate, in fine, these little seruices, as if they were mine. And yet, O my deare Lord, I am ashamed; but only, my not haueing anie thing els, to recount, with anie colour, of being mine owne, makes me vnfold these, so base beginnings of mine; to the end, that, whosoeuer may haue layd his owne, more solidly, and substantially vp, for thy seruice, may well haue good hope, by the meanes; since he, who hath vouchsafed to accept my poore beginnings, in part of payment, will certainly receaue those others, better, which are greater. I humbly beseech his Diuine Maiestie, to giue me grace, at length, that I may not still continue in these things, which are but beginnings; Amen.

THE

THE TWO AND THIRTIETH CHAPTER.

She treats, hovv it pleased our Lord, to put her in Spirit, into a place of Hell, vvhich she sayd, she had deserued for her Sinnes. She relates, vvhat vvas represented to her there; vvhich vvas but a kind of shaddovv, of such things, as are suffered in that place. She beginnes also, to declare the vvay, and manner, hovv that Monasterie vvas founded in Auila, *vnder the name of* S. Ioseph.

AFter a long time, when our Blessed Lord had already done me manie of those Fauours, which I haue heer related; as others also, which were very great; I found one day, whilst I was in Prayer, though I could not tell, how, that I was placed in Hell. And I vnderstood, that our Lord was pleased, that I should see the place, which the * Diuels had prepared for me, and which I had deserued for my * Sinnes. This lasted but a very little space of time; but yet, if I should liue manie yeares, I hold it for an impossible thing, that euer I should be able, to forget it.

* *This is not to be litterally vnderstood; for the Diuell can prepare no place for a Soule in Hell, but by the Decree of Almighty God, vpon the particular Iudgement giuen at the death of the Party.*

 The

* *The Sinnes of Ingratitude, discorrespondence, and inordinate affection to Creatures, vvhich she did committ; and the greater and mortall Sinnes, vvhich she vvould most certainly haue committed, if the Mercy of our Blessed Lord, had not preuented, and vvithheld her.*

* *Hell is represented to her in Spirit, after a most subtile manner, and it vvas shevved to her, and described by her, in such sort, as that such Creatures, may be capable thereof, as are indued not only vvith Mindes, but vvith Bodyes.*

The entrie thereof, seemed * to me, to be, after the manner, of a long, and straite Lane; or rather, as if it had been, a low, narrow, long, and darke Ouen. The ground seemed to be, as if it had been like water, all thickned with durt; and it was both very filthie, and of a most pestilentiall smell, and had a multitude of loathsome vermine, as flyes, and wormes, and such other vglie creatures, in it. At the end of it, there was a certaine hollow place, as if it had been a kind of a little Presse, in a wall; into which, I saw my self crowded, with great constraint. Now all that, was euen delightfull to the sight, in comparison of what I felt there; and this, which I haue sayd of it already, I also find to be very imperfectly described. But, as for the Feeling part, the verie beginning to say what it was, is a thing which can neither be well, no nor euen almost at all, related, as it was indeed; in regard that I felt a certaine fire, in my verie Soule, though yet I know not, how to declare it, as indeed it was. For, all those almost insupportable torments, which I haue felt, with all extremitie, in this life, and whereof the Physitians are wont to affirme, that euen in the Corporeall way, they are the greatest, which can be suffered in this world; (as namely, that shrinking vp of all my Sinnewes, when I instantly grew lame by it; besides manie other torments, in seuerall kindes; as also that I haue been vexed much, by the Diuel) are all no more, then absolutly iust nothing, in comparison of what I felt, in that place; besides

my

my knowing, (with all this) that no part of it, was euer to ceaſe, but to continue, without euer haueing an end. And yet, euen all this, which I haue ſayd, is alſo nothing, in comparíſon of that continuall agonizing of the Soule, that preſſing, that ſtifling, which is ſo very ſenſible an affliction, togeather with that deſperate kind of diſcontent, and diſguſt, and repining, which I am, no way, able to expreſſe. For, to ſay, that it is a continuall tearing of the Soule into fitters, is to ſay little; ſince, in that caſe, it ſeemes, that it muſt be ſome other bodie, who teares it; but, in this, the Soule it ſelf, is the verie Executioner, which euen teares it ſelf. There is, beſides all that, another ſtrange Ingredient, which is, that interiour kind of fire, and that vnſpeakable deſpaire, vpon thoſe intollerable torments, and ſorrowes. I ſaw not, who it was, that inflicted theſe things; but, me thought, I found my ſelf to be ſliced, and minced; and preſt, and burnt, all at once. And I ſay, and ſay againe, that that interiour fire, and deſpaire, is the very worſt of it all. Whilſt I was in this moſt peſtilentiall place, and that, without anie poſſibilitie of euer ſo much, as once hoping for anie comfort at all, there was no ſuch thing, to be t. ought of, as ſitting, or extending my ſelf; nor is there anie place voyd, to receaue one; though yet they had put me into that thing, which is like a hole in a wall; becauſe euen thoſe verie walls, which are alſo moſt hideous to the ſight, doe euen preſſe their verie ſelues cloſe, towards, and vpon one

another; and euerie thing there, helpes to choake. There is alſo no light in that place; but all is groſſe, and euen palpable darknes. For my part, I vnderſtand not, how this can be; for, with hauing no light at all, yet all that, which may be able to giue anie vexation to the Sight, is diſcerned, and ſeen. Our Lord was not pleaſed, at that time, that I ſhould ſee anie more of Hell; but afterward I had another Viſion, of moſt fearefull things, and of the puniſhment of certaine particular vices. And, forasmuch as I might be able to diſcerne, and iudge of, by the ſight, theſe ſeemed to be euen more hideous, then the former; but yet, in regard, that I felt not the paine of it, they made me not ſo much afrayd. For in this other preſent Viſion, our Lord was pleaſed, that I ſhould really feele thoſe torments, and afflictions in Spirit, euen as if my verie Bodie, had been ſuffering them there.

**The excellent fruits, vvhich this Saint did gather from this great Fauour, vvhich ſeems to be the ſole cauſe vvhy our B. Lord vvas pleaſed to impart this Fauour.*

* I know not, how all this could be; but yet I vnderſtood well enough, that it was a very great Fauour; and that our Lord was pleaſed, that I ſhould diſcerne, as euen by the verie ſight of mine owne eyes, from whence his great mercie, had deliuered me. For it is nothing, to haue heard talke of it; nor that, at other times, I had conſidered ſeuerall ſorts of torments; (though yet I did it not often; for I liked not that, very well, in regard of the feare it gaue me) nor yet, that the Diuels are wont to teare men in peices, with hot pincers; nor anie other thing, whereof I had read; for, all, in fine, is nothing, if once it be compared to this;

Since

Since this is wholy another kind of thing; and the torments of this world, (compared with this) are no more, then a meer Picture, in comparison of the Life; the verie burning, which is felt in this world, being but a verie trifle, in respect of that other. For my part, I remained astonished, and amazed at it, and so I am, euen whilst I am writing these things, though it hapned to me six yeares agoe. And it is a most reall truth, that euen now, in the verie place, where I am but thinking of them, the naturall heate of my bodie, beginnes to faile me, euen for verie feare. Nor doe I euer remember, what passed then; but that all my afflictions, and troubles, and whatsoeuer can be suffered in this life, seemed nothing to me; and so also, me thinkes, it seemes, that, in part, we complaine heer, without reason. And therefore I say againe, that this was one of the greatest Fauours, that I euer receaued, in my whole life, at the hands of our Lord. For it * hath benefited me very much, both towards the making me loose all feare, and care, concerning the tribulations, and contradictions of this life; as also, to giue me strength, towards the enduring them; and finally, to render thankes to our Blessed Lord, for deliuering me (as now I may hope) from those terrible, and perpetuall torments.

** The great benefit of thus Fauour.*

Since that time, as I was saying, there is nothing, which seemes not easie to me, in cõparison of one moment of that, which is to be suffered there. And I was in a very great wonder, that, hauing

hauing so often read diuerse Bookes, which giue me some notice of a part of the torments of Hell, I feared them so little, and held them in so small account, considering in what case I was then, and how it was possible for me, to receaue contentment in anie such thing, as finally was to carrie me on, to so wretched a place, as that is. Be thou eternally Blessed, O my God; for, how well hast thou made it appeare, that thou louedst me incomparably better, then I doe my self? How often, O my deare Lord, hast thou deliuered me, from that darke, and horrible Dungeon? and how often haue I returned, to cast my self in, thither, againe, euen against thy will? From hence also I got a facilitie, to be in very great paine, for the manie Soules of these Lutherans, which are condemned to Hell; and especially, because they had once been members of the Holy Catholique Church, by their Baptisme. I gained also great impulses, to doe good to Soules; and really, it seemes to me, to be very certaine, that, for the sauing of anie of them, from so greiuous, and euerlasting torments, I could suffer manie deaths, with a very good will. For, I consider, that if we see a person in this world, whome we loue, vndergoe anie great affliction, or paine, it seemes, that euen our naturall disposition inuites vs, to haue compassion of the case; and so much as that paine is greater, so much the more. And therefore, now, to see a Soule, which is, for euer, to be enchained, to the enduring of that supreame affliction,

tion, and miſerie of all miſeries, who ſhall be able to beare it, and what hart, can euer brooke it, without ſtrange trouble? And ſince we are moued heer, to ſo much compaſſion of men, whoſe miſeries haue yet a tearme prefixed, (and at the furtheſt, they are to end with their liues) how ſhall we be able to get patience, for thinking of the infinit torments of thoſe others, conſidering, what a huge number of Soules, the Diuel is daily carrying into Hell? This conſideration alſo makes me deſire, that, in a buſines of ſo mightie importance, we may not be ſatisfyed with leſſe, then the doeing of the very vttermoſt we can, on our part; and that we leaue nothing at all, vnattempted, to ſecure our ſelues by that meanes; and I humbly beſeech our Bleſſed Lord, to giue vs all, his grace, for this purpoſe.

When I conſider, that, howſoeuer I were formerly moſt wicked, yet had I ſome little care, to ſerue Almightie God; nor yet, did I then commit certaine things, which are taken and ſwallowed downe, by the world, as familiarly, as to turne the hand. And, with this, I endured huge ſickneſſes; and I did it, with that great patience, which our Lord was pleaſed to giue me, for that purpoſe; and I was alſo not inclined to murmure, and detract, or to ſpeake hardly of anie Creature; nay, it ſeemes to me, as if I ſcarce had power, to wiſh anie bodie anie ill; nor was I couetous, nor enuious, (for anie thing, that I could euer remember) at leaſt, to anie ſuch proportion, as might

reſult

result to the great offence of Almightie God. And some other things also there are, wherein (though I were very wicked) I had vsually, the feare of Almightie God before me. And yet, notwithstanding all this, I see where the Diuels * had taken vp, and prouided my lodgeing; and it is true, that, considering what my faults had been, it seemed to me, that I yet deserued more punishment.

Vide supra fol: 471.

But howsoeuer, vpon the whole matter, I declare; that it was a most horrible torment; and and that it is a dangerous thing, that the Soule should take contentment, and be at rest, which is falling, euerie minute, into Mortall Sinne. Nay rather, for the loue of Almightie God, let vs remoue all the occasions thereof; for, our Lord will help vs all, as he hath done me. And I humbly beseech his Diuine Maiestie, not to giue ouer, to hold me fast, in his hand, least, if he doe, I returne to fall; for, in that case, I see already, what is to become of me for euer; but I beseech our B. Lord againe, not to suffer it, euen for his owne mercies sake, Amen.

But now, after my seeing all this, as also manie other great things, and secrets, which our Lord, through his owne mercie, was pleased to shew me; concerning the Glorie, which is designed in the next life, for the good, and the Torments, for the wicked; and I procuring now, to light vpon some way, or meanes, whereby I might doe Pennance; for so much ill, as I had committed, and might

might be able alſo, to doe ſomewhat, towards the obtaining of ſo great a good, I deſired, euen to fly out of the ſight of mankind, and now at length, once for all, to deuide my ſelfe from the world, and to part from it. And my hart would now be quiet no longer, but yet was not that diſquiet of mine, anie troubleſome kind of thing, but rather of contentment, and guſt; and it was euident, that it came from Almightie God; and that his Diuine Maieſtie had giuen heate enough, to this Soule of mine, for the diſgeſting of other, and ſtronger meates, then ſhe had formerly taken. * And now, I beganne to conſider, what I might poſſibly be able to doe, for Almightie God; and the firſt thing, I thought, was to follow that firſt Call, which his Diuine Maieſtie had giuen me, to leade a Religious Life; and that, by the Obſeruance of my Rule, with the greateſt perfection, that I could practiſe. And though there were, in the Monaſterie, wherein I found my ſelf at that time, manie Seruants of Almightie God, by whome he was very much ſerued, in that place, yet in regard, they wanted temporall meanes, manie of the Religious woemen, were caſt into a kind of neceſſitie, to goe abroad ſometimes, for releife of the Houſe; but yet they did it ſo, as to paſſe, with all kind of chaſtitie, and pietie. And beſides, that Houſe was not founded according to the firſt rigour of the Rule; but only the ſame Rule, was obſerued, in conformitie with all the reſt of the Order, according to the Bulles of Relaxa-

* *A ſweet Effect, of a ſad Cauſe.*

laxation, and dispensation. There were also, some other inconueniences; and besides, it seemed to me, that the place was of much Regalo, in regard, that it was, both large, and pleasant. But especially, the inconuenience of going sometimes out of the Monasterie, was growne to be a very great one for me; though formerly, I had been one, who made most familiar vse of it my self; in regard that sometimes, some persons, whome the Superiours (being importuned) could not well refuse, tooke contentment, that I should accompanie them, who went abroad. And, by this meanes, according to the vse, which was held, I might grow by degrees, to remaine very little in the Monasterie. The Diuel also would be sure to helpe, to be partly a meanes, that I might remaine little at home; for alwaies, by my imparting to some of the Religious there, those good things, which I had learnt of others, with whome I vsed to conuerse, they receaued much aduantage, and good. But yet once, being there with a certaine person, it hapned, that she sayd, both to me, and others: What say you, if we should become, like those Religious woemen, who goe barefoot; for perhaps, it may be possible, in time, to make some Monasterie of that kind? But now I, hauing also these verie same desires, beganne to treat the busines, with that Widdow, my Companion, and Freind, of whome I spake before; who had also the same desire with me. Vpon this, she beganne to cast, how to endue it with Rent;

but

but I came quickly to find, that there was no great probabilitie of that; though the desire, which we had thereof, made vs yet beleiue, that it might perhaps, take effect. But I, on the other side, (finding great contentment, in the House, where I was, because it was much according to mine owne minde; and the Cell, wherein I liued, was of very great conueniences for me,) suspended my self, from being earnest, in the execution of that other designe; though yet, we did resolue, to recommend it, in particular manner, to Almightie God. And one day, as soone as I had Communicated, his Diuine Maiestie commanded me, in earnest manner, to endeauour it, to the verie vttermost of my power. And he was pleased to make me great promises, that the Monasterie should not faile to be made; and that he would be serued much in it; and that it should be called by the name of *S. Ioseph*; and that himself, would keepe vs safe, at one of the gates, and his Mother our B. Ladie, at the other; and that Christ our Lord would continue with vs; and that the place should proue, to be euen a Starre, which would yeild great brightnes, and splendour, of it self; and that, though other Religious Orders, were then relaxed, men must not thinke, that he was but little serued by them; and what should become of the world, if it were not for Religious persons? And that I should tell my Ghostlie Father, that he had commanded me all this; and that he wished him, not to oppose it, nor to diuert me from it. And

this Vision, which our Blessed Lord was pleased to giue me, was followed by so great effects, that the *Speech*, which was vsed therein, was such, and vttered in such a manner, that I could not possibly doubt, but that it was he. Howsoeuer, I was still, in extreame paine, because the great disquiets, and troubles, which I was sure the thing would cost, did partly represent themselues, to me; and considering, how extreamly well content I was, in that first House; and though formerly I had treated of this other busines, yet it was not with anie such resolution, and certaintie, as if it might be sure, to take effect.

Now, heer it seemed to me, that the reward set it self instantly before me, for the doing it; but yet, when I saw, that it was likelie to be a thing of very great disquiet, and trouble, I was still in a kind of doubt, what I would finally doe. And yet, they were so manie seuerall times, that our Lord renewed his *Speech* to me, vpon this subiect, (representing so manie causes, and reasons, for it) that I saw clearly enough, that it was his will. So that now, I thought no more of anie thing els, but only to acquaint my Ghostlie Father, with it; and so I gaue him all that, which had occurred, in writing. As for him, he durst not resolutly will me, to giue it ouer; but saw, that there was little apparance, to carrie it through, according to the discourse of naturall reason; in regard, that my Companion, and Freind, who was the onlie person, who was to doe it, had very little, or no meanes,

meanes, to effect it. He wished me, to treat of it with the Prelate, who was my Superiour; and that I should doe therein, what he ordained. But I spake not of these Visions, with that Prelate; but that Ladie treated with him, and told him, that she desired to erect a new Monasterie; and the Prouinciall did very gladly giue way; for he was a freind of all Religious Obseruance, and Pietie; and so he afforded all the fauour, which was needfull; and told her, that he would admit, and accept the House. They spake then, of the Reuenue, which it was to haue; and we neuer inclined, to let it consist of more, then Thirteen Religious; & this, for manie reasons. But, before we beganne to treat of the matter, thus farre, we wrote to the holie man, *Fray Pedro de Alcantara*, and acquainted him, with all that, which passed; and he counsailed vs to proceed in this designe; and he sent vs his opinion, vpon the whole busines.

But now, this purpose of ours, was no sooner knowne ouer the Towne, then there did instantly grow, to be such a persecution against vs, as cannot be written, in few words. The scoffes, the ieares, the laughing, the saying that it was a Foolerie, and senseless toy; That, for my part, I was well enough in my Monasterie; but for my Companion, and freind, they cast such a loade of persecution vpon her, that they euen ouerlayd her. As for me, I knew not, what to doe; for me thought, that they had partly some reason.

But being thus distressed, and recommending

my ſelf one day, to Almightie God, his Diuine Maieſtie beganne to comfort, and encourage me, and told me, that now I might ſee, through what difficulties thoſe Saints had paſſed, who had founded the Religious Orders of the Church; and that we were to paſſe through manie more perſecutions, then I could imagine; but that yet, we ſhould not be troubled, at all. He told me alſo ſome things, which I was to deliuer to my Companion; and the thing, at which I wondred moſt, was, that inſtantly we were comforted, in reſpect of all that, which was paſt; and encouraged for all that, which was to be future. And it is certaine, that there was not, in all that Towne, anie one perſon of Prayer; nay, in fine, there was ſcarce anie one at all, who did not oppoſe vs, at that time, and who thought not this deſigne, to be a moſt ſenſleſſe thing. There were ſo manie ieaſts, and iearings, and ſtirres, in our verie Monaſterie, that now euen the Prouinciall oppoſed himſelf ſtifly, againſt vs; and he changed his former opinion, and now would no longer admit the Houſe; but ſayd, that the Rent was both little, and beſides, not very ſecure; and that there was very great contradiction. He ſeemed to haue reaſon in all; and, in fine, he gaue-ouer the buſines, and would not admit the Houſe.

Now we, who had already receaued the firſt blowes, vpon our owne heads, were greatly troubled at it; but particularly, it ſtruck me much, that the Prouinciall was now found, to be oppo-

ſite;

site; for if he had still liked it, my self had been excused, and discharged, with all the world. But yet, they were not so favourable, to my Companion; for, her they would not absolue, but left her to her self; yea and they sayd, that she was obliged to take away the scandall.

She went therefore, to a great learned man, and a great Seruant of God, of *S. Dominick's Order*, to tell him, what had passed; and, indeed, to giue him account, of the whole busines. And this was, before the Prouinciall had giuen it ouer; for, now there was no Creature in the whole Towne, who would giue vs anie opinion, in the Case; and therefore, they might well affirme, as they did, that we proceeded, in all this, of our owne heads. But that Ladie made relation of the whole busines, to this holie man; and acquainted him with the Rent, which she meant to settle vpon it, out of her owne Estate, with much desire, that he would assist vs; for, he was the greatest learned man, in all that Towne, at that time; and perhaps, there were not manie, more learned, in his whole Order. I told him also, of all that, which we intended to doe, and some motiues thereof; but I acquainted him not, with anie Reuelation of mine, but only with those naturall reasons, which moued me. For, I desired not, that he should giue vs anie opinion, but according to them; And he, on the other side, wished, that we would giue him the tearme of eight dayes, wherein to answer. He asked vs also then,

whether we were reſolued to doe that verie thing, which he ſhould direct; and I told him, we were. But though I ſayd thus much; and, me thinkes, I would haue done, as I ſayd, yet did I neuer looſe aſſurance, that the Monaſterie, in fine, would be made. My Companion had yet a ſtronger Faith; for, whatſoeuer they might ſay to her, ſhe would neuer giue-ouer to execute the deſigne. But now, though I held it impoſſible, but that the worke would be done (ſo aſſuredly did I beleiue, that the Reuelation aforeſayd, was true, (prouided alwaies, that it were found to containe nothing, either againſt Holie Scripture, or the Decrees of the Church, which we are bound to beleiue, and obſerue) yet (howſoeuer (as I ſaid before) I conceaued that that Reuelation was really of Almightie God) if ſtill that learned man had told me, that we could not effect the thing, without offending his Diuine Maieſtie, and that we ſhould haue ſinned againſt good Conſcience, by procuring it, I conceiue that I ſhould inſtantly haue giuen it ouer, and ſought-out ſome other meanes, for my releif; but, for the preſent, our Lord imparted none, but this, to me.

But now, this Seruant of Almightie God, told me, that he had taken this buſines into his care, togeather with a full reſolution, to employ himſelf earneſtly, in procuring, that we might giue-ouer our purpoſe; becauſe the clamour of the people againſt it, had already come to his notice; and ſo alſo, had it appeared to euerie Creature,

to

to be an impertinencie;and besides,that a certaine Cauallier of the Towne, as soone as he had vnderstood, that we intended to speake with the Father, sent to him, to aduise him, to consider well what he did; and that by no meanes, he should help vs; yet, that now, himself, beginning to consider, what he was to answer vs, and to reflect seriously vpon the busines, and vpon the intention, which we had, and with what good order, and Religious manner we proceeded, he resolued, in fine, that it would be a thing, resulting much, to the Seruice of Almightie God; and that we should, by no meanes, forbeare, to put it in execution. And, in conformitie to this,his answer was; That we should make what hast we could, to conclude it; And he also let vs know his opinion, of the way, and manner, which we were best to hold in it;and that,though the Rent were little, yet Almightie God was to be trusted with somewhat; And that for his part, he desired, that whosoeuer should contradict, or oppose it, might be sent to him; for he would know very well, what to answer; And accordingly, he assisted vs euer, as I shall declare heerafter.

With this, we went, much comforted, away; as also, in that we found, how some holie persons of that place, who formerly had been opposite to vs, grew now to be appeased; and some of them, did also assist vs; and amongst them, was that holie Cauallier, of whome I made mention before. Who,in regard that our pretence seemed to aspire

to great perfection, as indeed it doth, (becauſe it is wholy grounded in Prayer) he gaue-vp this opinion; and Vote, That, howſoeuer the meanes, whereby things muſt be effected, ſeemed to carrie much difficultie with them, and to be without great apparance of ſucceſſe, yet perhaps, that it might fall-out to be of Almightie God. Now, it may be, that our Bleſſed Lord diſpoſed him, to be of this minde; and the Doctour alſo, that Preiſt, and Seruant of Almightie God, whome I related to haue voted firſt, and who is the verie Mirrour of all that Towne, & the perſon, whome Almightie God preſerues there, for the good of manie Soules, was now alſo growne already to aſſiſt me in the buſines. And thus we were come to this condition, by the helpe of manie Prayers; and now already, we had bought the Houſe, in a good part of the Towne, though but a poore one; but I value not that, at all; for, our Lord had told me before, that I ſhould enter, as well as I could, and that afterward, I ſhould find, what his Diuine Maieſtie would doe; and that, haue I ſeen well performed. And ſo, although I found, that we had but little meanes, yet I beleiued, that our Bleſſed Lord would take order, that we ſhould be fauoured, by other wayes.

THE THREE AND THIRTIETH CHAPTER.

She proceedes in the same Subiect of the Foundation of the Monasterie of the Glorious S.Ioseph. *She declares, howv she vvas commanded to attend to that busines; and of the time, vvhen she forbore to followv it; and of some troubles, vvich she had; and howv she vvas comforted in them, by our Blessed Lord.*

THis busines being now in such case, and so neer the point of finall dispatch, that they were to draw-vp the Writings the verie next day following, it fell out to be iust then, when our Prouincial grew to change his latter opinion, and returne to his former; and I beleiue, he was moued to it, by Diuine ordination, as we shall see afterward. For, our Prayers, hauing been so manie, as indeed they were, it seemes that our Blessed Lord went perfecting the worke, and appointing that it should be dispatched, though after a different manner, from what we conceiued. But when once the sayd Prouincial had formerly refused to admit of the House, my Ghostlie Father gaue me a commandment, that I should now, thinke no more of that matter. And yet, our Lord best knowes, what troubles, and afflictions, it had cost

me, before I could euer bring it to that ſtate, and condition, wherein then it was. But now, the thing being giuen ouer, all that former imputation was confirmed; Namely, that it was nothing, but an impertinencie of woemen; and their murmurings came particularly vpon me; though, till that time, the Prouincial had commanded it, to be done. In the meane while, I grew tó bé very ill beloued, in the Monaſterie, becauſe I went about to make a new one, which might be of more ſtrict Incloſure. For they ſayd, That I affronted them, by it; and, That God might be as well ſerued there; and, That there were better amongſt them, then my ſelf; and, that now, they diſcouered well enough, that I carried no true loue, to that Houſe; That it had been much better done, to procure to get Reuenues, and Rents, for that place, then for anie other. Yea and now, there wanted not ſome, who aduiſed, that I might be carried to Priſon; and there were but very few, who did, in anie kind, take my part. As for me, I ſaw, that they had reaſon, in very much, of what they ſayd; and ſometimes, I would be making my excuſes, though yét I were not able to tell them the cheif motiue thereof, which was, that I had been commanded to doe it, by our Bleſſed Lord. I knew not therefore well, what to ſay; and ſo I thought it fitter, to hold my peace. At other times, it pleaſed our Lord, to doe me very great Fauours; for, this of the Monaſterie, put me now, to no diſquiet at all; but I gaue it ouer, with as much facilitie, and

guſt,

guſt;as if it had neuer coſt me anie paines,or care. Yet this, could no Creature beleiue, no not euen thoſe perſons of Prayer,with whome I conuerſed; but they conceaued,that I was full of trouble, yea and of ſhame; and euen my Ghoſtlie Father himſelfe,did not abſolutly beleiue the contrary. But, as for me, when I conſidered, that I had done whatſoeuer I could,on my part, I thought I was no further obliged, to the effecting of what our Lord had commanded me.I remained ſtill, in the Monaſterie; and I found my ſelf with much contentment,and guſt;yet euen ſtill,I knew not well, how to imagine, but that the thing, would be done, ſooner, or later; and of this, I had no feare at all, though I knew not, either how, or when; but only I beleiued, that it would be certainly done.

That,which troubled me extreamly, was, that once my Ghoſtlie Father gaue me a great Mortification, as if I had done ſomewhat againſt his will. But, it ſeemes, our Lord was pleaſed, that I ſhould be in ſome affliction, euen by occaſion of that,which was moſt tender,and deare,to me.For, whilſt I was in this multitude of perſecutions, when I expected, that ſome kind of comfort would be coming towards me, he wrote me a Letter,to this effect:That * now he hoped, I ſaw, by what occurred, that all had been nothing,but a Dreame;That I ſhould doe well,to reforme my ſelf heerafter,ſo farre,as not to pretend,to meddle anie more with any buſines,nor to be talking any more

* *A ſad, and ſtrange proceeding.*

more of this, in particular; for that, I could not, but see well enough, what a scandall was growne vpon it; and other things he also sayd, which did all serue for nothing at all, but only, to put me to paine. This, I confesse, gaue me more trouble, then all those other things, put togeather; as conceauing, or at* least, as doubting, whether I might not haue been the occasion, of all the ill, which had hapned; and whether I might not haue committed some such errour, as whereby Almightie God, might haue been offended; nay, whether these Visions of mine, had not been Illusions; and so consequētly, whether my whole course of Prayer, had not been of the Diuel; and whether, finally, I were not then, in a plaine state of errour, and perdition. This, I confesse, oppressed me, with so great extremitie, that I grew to be all, in disorder, and subiect to extreame affliction. But our Lord, who was neuer wanting to me, in all those troubles of mine, which I haue expressed, was often pleased to comfort, and strengthen me; though I need not stand heer, to relate it. And he told me also then, that I should not vex my self; That I had greatly serued his Diuine Maiestie, in that busines; and not offended him at all; That, for the present, I should doe, what my Ghostlie Father had commanded me, in holding my peace, till it should be fitt to renew the busines. And, in the meane time, I remained full of contentment, and consolation; and I held all that persecution, for nothing, which had come vpon me, till then.

*How vv one suspition, u vvont to thrid it self close, vpon another.

But

But now, by this meanes, I was taught, by our Bleſſed Lord, what a very great benefit it is, to endure troubles, and perſecutions, for his ſake. For, ſo much was the loue of Almightie God encreaſed in my Soule, by this meanes, as were alſo manie other vertues, that I was amazed at it; and this, in fine, is the reaſon, why I cannot but deſire afflictions, and troubles. But the while, thoſe other perſons, thought, that I was extreamly out of countenãce, with what had hapned; and certainly I ſhould haue been ſo, indeed, if our Lord had not been pleaſed, to comfort me ſo highly, with that great Fauour. But then did thoſe ſtrong impulſes, and impetuoſities of the Loue of Almightie God, whereof I haue formerly ſpoken, beginne to encreaſe, more and more; and I alſo came to haue greater Rapts; though yet, I acquainted no Creature, with the gaine, which I had gotten by it.

In the meane time, that holie man, the *Dominican*, did neuer giue-ouer to beleiue, that the buſines would be ſure to take effect, euen as well, as I beleiued it, my ſelf. But I would take no knowledge of that, becauſe I was reſolued, not to ſwarue from what I had been commanded, by my Ghoſtlie Father. The *Dominican* negotiated alſo the Buſines, together with my Companion, and freind; and they wrote about it, to *Rome*, and made their Propoſitions, there. And the while, did the Diuel heer, by carrying things, from one perſon to another, procure to make it knowne, that I had had ſome Reuelation, in this buſines.

Vpon

Vpon this, ſome came to tell me, with a great deale of apprehenſion, and feare, that I ſhould doe well, to looke to my ſelf; and that the times were ſtrict, and ſhrewd; and that, perhaps, men might lay ſome things to my charge, and goe on, euen to the Inquiſitours, by way of complaint. But this, I confeſſe, made me ſport, and I beganne, to laugh at it; for it was neuer my caſe, to be afraid of anie ſuch thing as this; as knowing very well, of my ſelf, that in all things, which concerned Catholique Faith, yea euen to the leaſt Ceremonie of the Church, I was totally, for it; and that alſo, for the leaſt word of Holie Scripture, I would expoſe my ſelf, a thouſand times, to death. And therefore I deſired them, not to trouble themſelues, concerning me, in this point; and that my Soule were miſerable enough, and too much, if anie ſuch thing could be found in it, as might put me into anie feare of the Inquiſition; That, if I thought, there were anie ground, or cauſe, my ſelf would be the firſt, to goe thither; and that if it were a ſlaunder, raiſed vp againſt me, our Lord would deliuer me, from it; and I ſhould proue the Gainer, by that Bargaine.

Now, I treated of this matter, with the Dominican Father, who (as I ſayd) was ſo very learned a man, that I might well aſſure my ſelf, vpon whatſoeuer he ſhould declare to me heerin. And I told him then, vpon this occaſion, with the greateſt clearnes; that I could poſſibly vſe, of all the Viſions, which I had had; and of the manner of

Prayer,

Prayer, which I had vſed; and of the great Fauours, which our Bleſſed Lord had been pleaſed to doe me; and I humbly prayed him, to conſider all theſe things, very well; and to let me vnderſtand, if there were anie thing at all, in anie of them, againſt Holie Scripture; and that alſo, he would acquaint me, with the iudgement, which he made thereof. Now, all this he did; and ſo, ſetled and ſecured me, very much; and I grow to be alſo of opinion, that this accident, was of much aduantage, euen to him. For, though he were formerly, very good, yet he gaue himſelf, much more to Prayer, from that time forward; and withdrew himſelf, to a certaine retired Monaſterie, of his owne Order, which was a place of great Solitude, and ſilence; to the end, that ſo, he might exerciſe himſelf the better, in Prayer. He remained there, aboue two yeares; and then, Obedience to his Order, tooke him from thence; for which he was ſorrie enough. But they had need of ſuch a man, as he was; & I was no leſſe greiued, when he went from me, through the great want, which I was ſure, I ſhould haue of him; though yet I knew, withall, that he would be a gainer, by it. And whilſt I was in paine, about his iourney, our Lord bad me be comforted, and not troubled, for that he went away, to good purpoſe. And indeed, he came back againe afterward, with his Soule, ſo well improued, and aduanced, in the way of Spirit, that himſelf told me, at his returne, how he would not, for anie thing of this world,

world, but that he had gone. And I also, could say the same; for, whereas he had formerly giuen me assurances, and comforts, but only by his Letters, he was now growne able to doe it also, through the great experience, which he was come to haue in Spirit, and of Supernaturall things. And it also pleased Almightie God, to bring him back to vs, at such a time, as when his Diuine Maiestie saw, that there would be need of him, for assisting his worke concerning this Monasterie, which, his will was, should goe forward.

But, in the meane time, I remained in silence, for a matter of some fiue, or six moneths; not hearing, or saying anie thing, of this businesse; nor did our Blessed Lord command me anie thing, about it; nor vnderstood I the reason thereof; but yet still, I could not part with the beleif, but that the busines would be done, sooner, or later.

But at the end of that time aforesayd, the Rectour of the Colledge *of the Societie of* IESVS, who had been there, till then, being now to remoue from hence, his Diuine Maiestie brought another to be in his place, who was a very Spirituall person, and of great courage, and vnderstanding, and Learning; and he came, at a certaine time, when I was in very great need of helpe. For, in regard, that he, who was my Ghostlie Father, had a Superiour ouer himself, and by reason that they haue this vertue in perfection, not so much as

once

once to ſtirre, but in conformitie to the will of their Superiours; and though this Ghoſtlie Father of mine, had a very good vnderſtanding of my Spirit, and deſired, that I might profit, & proceed, he yet aduentured not to conclude ſome things, with a firme reſolution, for diuers reaſons, which he had for it. And on the other ſide, my Spirit did preſſe already, to paſſe on, with certaine impulſes, and impetuoſities, which were ſo great, that I found it a very troubleſome thing, to be tyed ſhort; and yet for all this, I reſolued, not to exceed thoſe bounds at all, which he had preſcribed. And being one day, in much affliction, as conceauing, that my Ghoſtlie Father did not beleiue me, it pleaſed our B. Lord, to require me, not to trouble my ſelf; affirming, that that difficultie would be ſoone at an end. For my part, I was much ioyed by this, as conceauing, that I was quickly to dye; and I was wont particularly to reioyce, when I remembred it. But afterward, I ſaw clearly, that his Speech, concerned the coming of this new Rectour, of whome I ſpake; and afterward, I neuer had anie occaſion to be in paine, in regard that this ſayd new Rectour, contradicted not the Sub-Rectour; who was my Confeſſarius; but rather *directed him, to giue me comfort, and ſcope; and that there was no cauſe of feare; and that he ſhould not conduct my Soule, by ſuch ſtraight, & narrow wayes, and with ſuch reſtrictions; but ſhould permit the Spirit of our Lord, to worke in me. For indeed, at ſome times it ſeemed, that by

* *A holy & vvise man.*

reason of those great impetuosities of Spirit, the Soule had scarce roome, for so much as to breath.

I went then, to visit this Rectour; and my Ghostlie Father required me, to treat with him, with all libertie, and clearnes. As for me, I was wont, to find very great difficultie, to declare my self in that kind; but yet really, it is very true, that euen at my verie first entrance into the Confessionarie, I felt a kind of, I cannot tell, what, to call it, in my Spirit, which I remember not, my self to haue euer found, by occasion of anie Creature, either before, or after; nor can I distinctly tell, how it was; nor yet am I able, to expresse it fully, by anie way of Comparison. But it was a certaine Spirituall ioy, and a kind of vnderstanding, which my Soule had, that the Soule of that man, would be able to vnderstand me; and that there would be a kind of conformitie in iudgement, between vs two, although (as I was saying) I vnderstood not, how. If indeed, I had euer spoken with him before; or if others had peraduenture giuen me anie great newes of the man, it had not been very strange, that it should ioy me, when I came to vnderstand, that he was to heare me. But neither he, nor I, had euer spoken word to one another; nor was there anie one, by whose meanes, I had euer had anie notice at all, of him; and yet, since that time, I haue seen very well, that my Spirit deceaued me not; becausse it hath been of great aduantage in all kinds, both to my Soule, and me, to treat with him. For, his kind of conuersa-

uerſation, and way of conference, and communication, is a thing of great importance, for ſuch perſons, as our Lord ſeemes to haue forwarded much, in the way of Spirit; for, he makes them runne-on apace, and not goe, foot by foot. And his manner is, to vntye them ſoundly, and totally, from all Creatures; and to put them, to the exerciſe, and practiſe of Mortification; for, in this, our Bleſſed Lord hath imparted a moſt particular talent to him, as he hath alſo done, in manie other things. Now, as ſoone as I beganne to communicate my affaires with him, I inſtantly vnderſtood his ſtile, and way of proceeding; and I found, that he had a holie, and pure Soule; and that our Lord had giuen him a particular tallent in the trying, and knowing of Spirits. So that I was comforted, both much, and very ſoone, after I had once communicated with him; and our Bleſſed Lord beganne againe, to preſſe me, towards a treating of the Buſines of the Monaſterie; and that I ſhould declare, both to my Ghoſtlie Father, and to this Rectour, the manie grounds, and reaſons, why they were not to diſſwade, and diuert me from it; and ſome of them, made them hartily afrayd to doe it. For, this Father Rectour, neuer did ſo much as doubt, but that it was the Spirit of Almightie God, becauſe he had beheld, and conſidered the effects, with very great ſtudie, and care. In fine, after the conſideration of manie things, they durſt not preſume to diuert me; and my Ghoſtlie Father did againe giue me leaue, to

vse all the endeauour I could; and yet, I was able, to see very well, what a great deale of trouble it would giue me, in regard I was so vtterly alone, and had very little power, to effect anie thing. But we agreed, that it should be carried with great priuacy; and therefore I procured, that a certaine Sister of mine, who liued els-where, should buy, and build the House, as if it were for her self; and that it should be done with monie, which our Lord found meanes. by certaine wayes, wherewith to pay for it. But it would be a long busines, to tell you, how his Diuine Maiestie, went prouiding it; for, as for me, I desired to be very sure, to doe nothing, which might be against Obedience. But I was not then to learne, that, if I told anie thing to the Superiours of my Order, the whole Busines would be lost, as it was before; yea and that, if I did so now, it would fall-out to be worse. In the point of getting monie, for making the bargaine for a Seate, and for building also the House, I endured manie troubles; and some of them, all alone; though yet my Companion, and freind, did also the best she could. But, in fine, she could doe little, and indeed so very little, that, vpon the matter, it was a kind of nothing, but only to take vpon her the name, and to lend it her countenance; for, all the rest of the trouble, was mine; and it came vpon me, so very manie wayes, that I doe euen wonder, now, how I was able, to endure it, then.

Sometimes, when I was full of affliction, I would

would be vttering my ſelf, to Almightie God, after this manner: O my deare Lord, how comeſt thou to command me things, which ſeem impoſſible? For, though I be a woeman, yet if I had libertie, perhaps ſomething might be done; but being tyed vp, in all reſpects, without monie, and without knowing, where to get anie, whereby either the *Breue*, or anie thing els, may be had, what can I doe, O Lord? But being once in a certaine neceſſitie, and not knowing, which way to turne my ſelf; and not being able to pay the workmen; *S. Ioſeph*, my true Father, and Patron, appeared to me, and told me, that, monie would not be wanting to me; and therefore, that I ſhould make the agreement; and ſo I did, euen when I had no monie at all; and afterward, our Bleſſed Lord prouided it, by ſo ſtrange wayes, that they, who heard of it, were amazed.

But now, me thought, the Houſe ſhewed to be very little; and indeed, it was ſo, and in that extremitie, that it ſeemed not capable, of being euer able to be a Monaſterie; and I had a good minde, to buy another Houſe; but neither had I, wherewithall to doe it, nor otherwiſe, anie meanes to procure it; though there were yet, a very little one, ioyning to it, whereof a Church might be made. But after I had Communicated, one day, our Lord ſayd thus to me: *I haue already vvilled thee, to beginne, as thou mayeſt.* And then, after the manner of exclamation, he ſayd thus alſo to me: *O the couetouſnes of the race of mankinde; vvhich thinkes, that*

it shall vvant euen earth, vpon vvhich to tread! Hovv often haue I slept in the open ayre, as not knovving, vvhere to lay my head? Vpon this, I was amazed, and found that he had reason; and so I went to that little House, and ordered it. And though it were very little, yet it was iust fitt, to make such a kind of Monasterie; and I made it no more my busines, to compasse a larger Seate, but procured, to build vpon that, in such sort, as it might be fitt to be inhabited, all course, and rude, and without anie other misterye, but only, that it might not be hurtfull, in point of health; and so it shall euer remaine.

Vpon the day of *S. Clare*, I going to receaue the B. Sacrament, she appeared to me, in very great beautie, and bad me be of a good courage, and goe on, in the worke which I had begunne; and that she would assist me. And this hath proued so true, that a Monasterie of Religious woemen, of her Order, which is neer this, doth help to sustaine, and feed vs; and (which yet is more) she hath, by little and little, brought this desire of mine, to such perfection, that the self-same pouertie, which that Blessed Saint established in her House, is exercised also in this; and we liue of Almes; which point, hath cost me no small trouble, in getting it confirmed, by His Holines; and to be further also established, in such sort, as that no innouation may be made, nor the House be euer capable of Rent. And now doth our Blessed Lord euen more then this; and perhaps, the same may grow,

grow, by the interceſſion of this Bleſſed Saint; for, his Diuine Maieſtie prouides vs with all things neceſſarie, in moſt compleat manner, without our euer asking anie thing, of anie Creature. Let him be Bleſſed for all things, Amen.

But I, being about that time, vpon the Day of the Aſſumption of our B.Ladie, in a certaine Monaſterie of the Glorious S.Dominick's Order, I was conſidering the manie Sinnes of my former time, (which I had Confeſſed in that Houſe) and the accidents of my wicked life; and ſuddainly, there came ſo great a Rapt vpon me, that it tooke me, in effect, wholy out of my ſelf. I then ſat downe; and yet it ſeemed to me, that I was not able, either to heare Maſſe, or ſo much, as to ſee the Eleuation; for which, I remained afterward, with ſome ſcruple. Now, it ſeemed to me, that, whilſt I found my ſelf in that condition, I was apparelled with a certaine *Garmēt of much whitenes, and clearnes; and at the firſt, I could not tell, who it was, that cloathed me; but afterward, I ſaw our B.Ladie, on the right hand, and my Father, S.Ioſeph, on the left, who apparelled me then, with that Robe; and it was giuen me to be vnderſtood, that I was now growne, to be cleanſed, from my Sinnes. When thus I was apparelled, and

* *All theſe things, and the like; as namely, Darts, or Chaines, or Crowwnes, or Ievvells &c.*

are not to be vnderſtoood after a groſſe, & materiall vvay, but yet, that really they haue truth, in their being repreſented diſtinctly, & clearly, to the Imagination of the Partyes; and they cheifly ſerue, as teſtimonies, & Signes, of thoſe interiour graces, & vertues, vvhich vſe to be imprinted vpon Soules, at thoſe very times, by the mercy of our B. Lord.

found my self full of ioy, and glorie, it instantly seemed to me, that our B. Ladie layd hold vpon me, and told me, That it contented her much, to see me serue the Glorious S. Ioseph; That I was to beleiue, that, what I pretended, concerning the Monasterie, should be effected; and, That our Lord, and they two, would be much serued, there; That I must not be afrayd, that euer there would be anie failing therein, howsoeuer some commandments, which might fall out to be imposed vpon me; would not be according to my gust; for, euen themselues, in fine, would defend, and keep vs; That her Sonne had already promised, that he would be, and remaine with vs; and in testimonie that all this should proue true, she cast a faire, and bright Chaine of gold about my neck, with a Crosse fastned to it, of great value. But this Gold, and these Pretious Stones, are so very different from those of this world, that there is no manner of comparison between them; for, the beautie of these, is farre other, then anie thing, which we can imagine heer. Nor doth humane Vnderstanding ariue to know, of what the Garment was made; nor how to fancie that cleare whitenes to it selfe, which our Lord is pleased to represent; for, all that, of this inferiour world, is no better, then a kind of scratch, with a coale, as a man may say, in respect of the other. The beautie also, which I saw in our B. Ladie, was excessiue, though yet I could not determine the forme, or figure of anie particular part, which I might assigne

ſigne her, but only the frame, and ayre of the whole face togeather. She was apparrelled in white, with exceſſe of ſplendour; but yet of no ſuch kind, as dazles, but moſt dearly ſweet. As for the Glorious S.Ioſeph, I ſaw not him ſo clearly; though yet, I well perceaued, that he was there; like thoſe Viſions, whereof I ſpake, which are not ſeen. Our B.Ladie, was extraordinarily young; and ſhe remained with me, a very little while; and I had exceſſiue glorie, and guſt by it; and more, in my opinion; then euer I had enioyed before; and I would certainly haue been glad enough, if I might neuer haue left it. It ſeemed to me, that I ſaw them both; aſcend to Heauen, with a very great multitude of Angells; and I, the while, remained in much Solitude; though yet withall, ſo comforted, and eleuated, and euen diſſolued, and recollected in Prayer, that I remained, for ſome ſpace of time, in ſuch ſort, as not to be able, either to ſpeake, or ſtirre; but I was wholy, as it were, out of my ſelf. And I continued with a great impulſe of deſire, to be euen as it were, annihilated, for Almightie God; and I found alſo ſuch effects thereof; and the whole, paſſed-on in ſuch ſort, as that I was neuer able, (though I endeauoured much) to doubt, but that this Viſitation was of Almighty God.

The Queen of the Angells left me topp-full of comfort, and of profound peace, by what ſhe ſayd to me, of Obedience; and the Caſe, was this. For my part, I was very vnwilling, not to giue this

Houſe vp, to the Order; and indeed our Lord himſelf had told me, that it was not fitt, that they ſhould haue it; and he alſo deliuered me the reaſons, why it was not, by anie meanes, fitt; but that I ſhould ſend about it, to Rome, by a certaine way; and he alſo made me know, that he would cauſe it to be diſpatched, from thence; and ſo it was. And it was ſent by that verie meanes, whereof our Lord had told me; but we ſhould neuer haue finally been able to diſpatch it, of our ſelues; and vpon the occaſions, which ſucceeded afterward, it was very fitt, that it ſhould be ſubmitted, by way of Obedience, to the Biſhop. Yet then, I knew him not, nor vnderſtood, what kind of Prelate he was; but our Lord was pleaſed, that he ſhould be ſo good, and ſhould fauour this Houſe, as much as was fitt, yea and euen neceſſarie, for the encountring of that great cõtradiction, which occurred heerin; as I ſhall declare afterward; and to put it into that ſtate, wherein now it is. And let him be euer Bleſſed, who hath ſo diſpoſed of all, Amen.

THE

THE FOVRE AND THIRTIETH CHAPTER.

She declares, hovv at this time she vvas neceſſarily to goe from that place; and she shevves the cauſe thereof; and hovv her Superiour commanded her to goe, for the comfort of a certaine Ladie, vvho vvas much afflicted. She beginnes to treat of that, vvich hapned to her there; and of the great fauour vvhich it pleaſed our Lord to doe, by her meanes, in ſtirring vp a very principall perſon, to doe him great ſeruice; and hovv aftervvard, she receaued much fauour, and protection from him This is an admirable Diſcourſe; and very much to be noted.

BVt, notwithſtanding all the care I tooke, that men might not know, what we were doing, this whole Buſines, could not be carried with ſo much ſecrecie, but that manie, muſt needs vnderſtand it; and ſome of them did beleiue it; and others, not. For my part, I was hartily afrayd, that, if the Prouinciall ſhould come, and they chance to tell him of it, he would command me to giue it ouer; and then, the whole deſigne would be at an end. But our Lord ordained things, in ſuch ſort, that

that, about à matter of twentie leagues off, it occurred, that there was a certaine Ladie, very much afflicted, by the death of her Husband; and she found her self, in such extremitie thereby, that her health was much concerned, and feared. Now, she had gotten some notice of * this miserable poore wretched Sinner; for it seemes, that our Lord had ordained already, that they should speake well of me, in her hearing, for the effecting of other good things, which depended vpon this. This Ladie was very well acquainted with this Prouinciall; and he, considering, what a principall person she was, and that I was in a Monasterie, which kept not Clausure, our Lord gaue her so great a desire to see me, (as conceauing, that she should receaue comfort, by my meanes) that it was almost no longer now, in her power, not instantly to procure, by all possible endeauour, to get me thither; and so she sent to the Prouinciall, who was very farre off, at that time; and accordingly he also sent me an expresse commandment, vnder Obedience, that forthwith I should transport my self thither, with a Companion. Now, I came to know of this, vpon a Christmasse-Day, at night; and it put me into much disorder, and gaue me a great deale of paine, to find, that they resolued to carrie me away, as conceauing, that there was some goodnes in me. For, considering how wicked I knew my self to be, I could, by no meanes, endure it; but so, recommending my self much to Almightie God, I remained, during all the

*She meanes her selfe.

the time of *Matins*, or at leaſt the farre larger part thereof, in a verie great Rapt. Our Lord declared to me then, that I should not faile to goe, and that I was not to harken to the opinions of others; for few would thinke, without raſhnes, that they could aduiſe me to goe; but that, howſoeuer the iourney might be of much trouble to mee, yet that he would be greatly ſerued thereby; and that it would be alſo very conuenient, that I ſhould abſent my ſelf from hence, till the *Breue* were come; becauſe the Diuel had a great plott prouided, againſt the time, when the Prouinciall should be there, but yet that I muſt be afrayd of nothing, for that, in fine, he should aſſiſt me, in the bnſines. Vpon this, I was much comforted, and encouraged; and I related the whole Storie, to the Rectour, who told me, that I muſt, by no meanes, forbeare to goe; but others ſayd, that I muſt not doe it, by anie meanes; and that it was but an inuention of the Diuell, to the end, that ſome miſcheife might happen to me; and that my beſt way would be, to reply vpon the Prouinciall. But I obeyed the Rectour; and conſidering alſo, what had paſſed in Prayer, I beganne my iourney, without feare; but yet, not without extreame confuſion, to conſider, vnder what title, and occaſion, they called for me. And finding how much they were deceiued, it made me euen importune our Bleſſed Lord, ſo much the more, not to forſake me. Now it comforted me extreamly, that there was in that place, whither I was going, a Colledge

of

of *the Societie of Iesus*, and that I might be subiect to that, wherein they should direct me, when I was there; for, by this meanes, I conceaued, that I was to be in a kind of safetie.

But when I ariued there, our Blessed Lord was pleased, that the Ladie should receaue so much comfort, that her amendment was quickly seen; for she was, euerie day, better and better. And this was the more esteemed, because (as I sayd before) the paine, wherein she was, did hold her in great difficulties, and straights. And it is likelie, that our Lord graunted her ease, at the instance of the manie prayers, which certaine holie persons, whome I knew, did make in my behalfe, that so, all might succeed happily to me. She had also, euen in her self, a great feare of Almightie God, and was so full of vertue, and goodnes, that her much Christianitie, and pietie, supplyed for that, which was wanting in me. Now, she grew into a great loue of me; and I remained, not a whitt in her debt, when I saw her goodnes. But yet, in effect, euen all, was trouble to me there; for, the Regalo's, which they gaue me, were no lesse, then so manie torments to me; and their making so much account of me, as they shewed, did put me into a great deale of feare. I therefore carried my Soule so restrained, and so retired within my self, that I durst not be, anie way, careless in that kind; and so also was not our Lord vnmindefull of me. For, he did me, whilst I was there, most excessiue Fauours; and they endued me, with so true,

true, and ſo great libertie of Spirit, as to make me vndervalue, & deſpiſe all thoſe teſtimonies of eſtimation,& honour, which I found there;& the more,the more;and ſo,as that I failed not,to treat with thoſe Ladies, who were ſo great, with as much libertie, as if I had been equall to them; whereas yet they were of ſuch qualitie, that I might, without anie diſhonour at all to my ſelf, haue been euen their domeſtick Seruant.I drew a great aduantage, and benefit from thence; and ſo I told her. I found that ſhe was ſubiect to ſome weakneſſes, and paſſions, as my ſelf am; and how little ſhe was, in reaſon, to eſteem her greatnes, and power; which ſtill, the more it is,ſo much the more trouble, and care, it drawes after it. And they are faine to take ſuch thought, for liuing in ſuch a forme, and methode, as is fitt, forſooth, for their greatnes, and ranke, that, vpon the matter,it ſcarce giues them leaue to liue. For,they eat out of time, and out of order; becauſe all,forſooth, muſt goe in conformitie,to the ſtate,which they hold, and not with anie regard, to their conſtitution, and health; nay ſometimes, they muſt feed vpon ſuch meates, as are more agreable to their greatnes, then to their guſt; and ſo, as that, for my part, I wholy abhorred,ſo much as euen to deſire to be a great Ladie. God deliuer me from ſuch ill-fauoured grauitie, and greatnes, as this; for, though the Ladie,of whome I ſpeake, be one of the greateſt of this Kingdome, and I beleiue, there are few, more humble, and more affable,

affable, then she) yet really, I had, and haue compassion of her, to see, how she passes, manie times, not in conformitie, euen so much as with her owne inclination, but to comply with her condition; for euen, in point of Seruants, there is very little trust to be reposed; and though she had them good, yet must she not speake more confidently, and kindly, to one of them, then to another; and if she doe, whosoeuer is most fauoured by her, must be sure to be lesse beloued by others. In fine, this greatnes, is a great subiection; and indeed, one of the greatest Lyes, which euer the world can tell, is, when it calls such persons as these, Lords, and Ladies; for, as for me, they all seem to be no other thing, then euen Slaues; and that, a thousand times ouer.

Our Lord was pleased at that time, whilst I remained with that Ladie, in her House, that the domesticks also there, improued much in the seruice of his Diuine Maiestie, though yet, for my part, I was not free from some troubles, yea and certaine enuies also, which were expressed, to my disaduantage, by certaine persons, in regard of the great affection, which that Ladie bore me; and perhaps, they were so ill aduised, as to imagine, that I had some thought of interest, by what I did. But our Lord was pleased to permit, that they should giue me some few little troubles, both in this kind, and also in others, least els, I might perhaps, haue growne to be intoxicated, by the Regalo, which was vouchsafed to me, on the other side;

side; but he was pleased, to fetch me out of all those accidents, and aduentures, with the aduantage, and improuement of mine owne Soule.

Whilst yet I remained there, a certaine Religious man, and a very eminent person, with whome I had treated sometimes, (though it were manie yeares before) did chance to ariue in that place. And I being, one day, at Masse, in a Monasterie of his Order, which was neer to the place where I kept, was taken with a kind of inclination, to know, in what condition, or state, that Soule was; for I desired, that he might be a very great Seruant of Almightie God. I rose then from sitting where I was, that so I might be going towards him; but yet, hauing been already recollected in Prayer, it seemed to me then, afterwards, that it would be no better, then lost time; and what, forsooth, had I to doe with him? and so, I then disposed my self, to sit downe againe; and (as I now remember) I did the verie same thing, no lesse, then three seuerall times. In fine, the good Angell was stronger, then the ill; and I went, and required him to be called; and so he came. I then beganne to aske him diuerse questions, as he did me, (because manie yeares had slipt away, since we mett last) concerning the seuerall Liues of one another. And I beganne to tell him, that as for mine, it had been subiect to manie afflictions of Minde. Vpon this he pressed much, to know, what those afflictions might be; and I told him, that it was neither greatly pertinent to be knowne, nor

very fitt for me, to relate. But he replyed, that, since the Father of S. Dominick's Order knew them, that Father (whome I had affirmed, to be so much his freind) would presently let him know them; and therefore, that I needed not trouble my self to relate them. But, in fine, the Case grew to be this, That neither was it in his power, to forbeare to importune me; nor in mine, to forbeare to declare my self heerin, to him. For, with all that trouble, and shame, which I vsed to haue, whensoeuer there was discourse of things, like this, yet, when I treated of them with this man, and with the Rector alsо *of the Societie*, of whome I spake before, it put me to no trouble at all, but rather, it was of comfort to me. I therefore vnfolded my selfe to him, but yet vnder the Seale of Confession; and me thought, he was more aduised, then euer; though I alwayes held him, to be a man of very great vnderstanding. I considered the manie talents, and parts he had, wherewith to doe a huge deale of good, if he would giue himself entirely, to Almightie God. And it is true, that I haue had this qualitie, for diuerse of these latter yeares, that I cannot see anie Creature, who contents me much, * but I must instantly desire, to haue him wholy giuen to Almightie God; and I wish it, euen with such an extremitie of appetite, that I know not, almost in those cases, what to doe with my self. And though it be very true, that I would faine haue all the world doe him Seruice, yet I desire, with very great

* *This Saint was an excellent person, to make a freind of.*

great impulse, and euen impetuositie, that the persons, who please me best, should doe it most; and so I often vse, to importune our Lord extreamly, in their behalf. But, as for that Religious man, of whome I was speaking, he besought me, that I would recommend him earnestly to Almightie God; but that was more, then needed; for already, I was so gone with the man, that I could not possibly doe otherwise. And so I went to the place, where I was accustomed to put myself in Prayer, all alone, and being then, in deep recollection, I beganne to deale with our Blessed Lord; and it was in a stile, so very familiar, that it was euen halfe foolish; for I treat with him, manie times, without knowing almost, distinctly, what I say. For then, it is not so properly my person, as my Loue, which speakes; and the Soule is so alienated euen from her self, that I scarce discerne the difference, which then there is, between Almightie God, and me. For, the great loue, which my Soule knowes, that his Diuine Maiestie beares her, makes her forget, what she is in her self, as conceauing, that she is then, in him. And so, as if both she, and he, were one, and the self-same thing, without diuision, or distinction, she vtters but impertinencies, and roauings. I remember, that I told him thus much, (after I had begged of him, with abundance of teares, that the Soule of that Religious man, might apply it self, to his Seruice, in great earnest) That, although I held him already, for good, yet that would not

ſerue my turne; for, I muſt haue him very good; and accordingly, I ſayd further, thus, in plaine tearmes: *O Lord thou muſt not denye me this fauour; but conſider, that this man vvill be very fitt, to make a freind for vs both.*

O great Humanitie, and Bountie of Almightie God! nor doth he ſo much conſider our words, but the deſires, and affections, wherewith they are ſpoken? But now, how can he come to endure, that ſuch a miſerable Creature, as I, ſhould ſpeake to his Diuine Maieſtie, with ſo much boldnes? But, let him be Bleſſed, for euer.

The while, I remember well, that in thoſe howers of Prayer, wherein I exerciſed my ſelf that night, our Lord gaue me a great affliction, by my doubting, whether I were in his fauour. But now, I deſired not ſo much, to know that, as I did euen deſire to dye, rather then to continue in ſuch a life, as wherein I might not be ſure, whether I were dead, or no. For, it were not poſſible for me, to endure a sharper death, then to thinke, that I had offended Almightie God. And this paine, put me into ſuch ſtraights, that, being all regaled, as I was, and euen melted, and diſſolued in teares, I humbly beſought his Diuine Maieſtie, that he would not permit it. And ſo I came then to vnderſtand, that I might well be comforted, and confide, that I was in ſtate of Grace; for that ſuch loue of Almightie God, and the imparting of ſuch Fauours, and feelings, as his Diuine Maieſtie vouchſafed to me, were not compatible with

vith anie such Soule, as should be in Mortall Sinne.

But, in the meane time, I grew into a kind of ssured hope, that our Lord would grant the hing, to that other person, which I humbly egged at his hands. He commanded me also, to eliuer certaine words to him. But at this, indeed, was troubled much, as not knowing, how I hould be able to vtter them. For, the point of arrying a message to a third person, in such sort s I was saying, is a thing, which doth alwaies af-lict me; especially, when I know not, how it will e taken; or, whether the person will not laugh t me, for my labour. This put me to a great deale f trouble; but yet, in fine, I thinke, I was so farre erswaded, as to promise Almightie God, that I would not forbeare to impart them; and through he great confusion, and shame, wherein I was, I * wrote them, and so deliuered them to him. And now, this well appeared, to be an action of Almightie God, by the great effect it wrought. For, he resolued to giue himself to Prayer, after very a serious manner; though yet, he did it not so very soone. But yet, our Lord designing to make him wholy his owne, was pleased to declare certaine truths to him, by my meanes; which, howsoeuer I vnderstood them not my self, did yet fall out so fitly for him, that he was euen amazed. And our Lord disposed him to beleiue, that they came from his Diuine Maiestie; and I, on the other side, (though I be that poore miser-

* *A very strange demonstration of a most ciuill, noble, and freindly hart.*

able Creature, which I am) did humbly, and earneſtly beſeech our Lord, that he would perfectly, and entirely, conuert that man to himſelf, and make him abhorre all the contentments, and Creatures of this life. And ſo (for which let him be Bleſſed for euer) he hath been pleaſed to doe it, and that in ſo very perfect a manner, that, whenſoeuer this Seruant of his, is ſpeaking to me, it makes me, in effect, turne half foole; and if I had not ſeen it, with my verie eyes, I ſhould hold it for a doubtfull thing, how Fauours could poſſibly be heaped-vp, ſo very high, vpon a Creature, in ſo ſhort a time; and ſhould hold him, ſo buſily, and continually employed, vpon Almightie God, that already he ſeemes not to liue, for the vſe of anie thing of this world. I humbly beſeech his Diuine Maieſtie, to keep him in his protection, ſtill; for certainly, if he proceed after this rate, (as I hope in our Lord, he will,) his Spirit being ſo deeply rooted in the knowledge of himſelf, he will grow to be, of the moſt eminent Seruants he hath; and will be able to doe good to manie Soules. For he hath gotten great experience, concerning things of Spirit, in a very ſhort time; and theſe are guifts, which Almightie God imparts, when, and how, he will, without anie preciſe reſpect, either to the time, which hath been ſpent, or els, to the qualitie of the Seruice. I ſay not yet, but that this may alſo import much; but that our Lord forbeares ſometimes, to giue that, to a perſon, in twentie yeares of Contemplation, which

yet

et he forbeares not to bestow vpon some other,
one. Our Lord knowes the reason of this. And
is also a deceiptfull errour, which abuses vs,
hen it seemes, we may vnderstand, and obtaine
hat, by account of yeares, which can, by no
neanes, be had, without experience of the verie
hings, as they are. And so, manie err, as I haue
ayd, in thinking that they are fitt to iudge of
pirits, without hauing anie themselues. I say not,
ut that a learned man, though he haue no great
nowledge of Spirit, may gouerne another man,
who hath Spirit. But this is to be vnderstood,
oth in the exteriour, and in the interiour way,
o farre, as it may carrie a conformitie, with the
Naturall Powers, by the worke of his Vnder-
tanding; and as for those things, which are Su-
ernaturall, he must be carefull, that all goe on,
with consent to Holie Scripture. And for the rest,
et him not vex himself; nor conceaue, that he vn-
derstands that, whereof, indeed, he knowes no-
thing; nor stifle, and choake those Spirits, which,
forasmuch as concernes these things, are gouer-
ned by another, and a higher Lord; for, in fine,
they are not, without a Superiour of their owne.

Be not amazed at this; nor let these things
seem impossible to you; for, all is very possible to
our Lord; but procure you, to re-inforce your
Faith, and to humble your self, when you see,
that our Blessed Lord knowes, how to make a
poore, old, ignorant woeman, become a more
knowing Creature, perhaps, in this Science, then

he, who may be otherwise, a very learned man. For, by meanes of this Humilitie, one shall be able to doe more good, both to the Soules of others, and his owne, then if he grow to be Contemplatiue, without that Vertue. And I say, and say againe, that if he be not a man of experience, or if, at least, he haue not very abundantly of Humilitie, wherewith to vnderstand; that he vnderstands not the busines, (and that yet, it is not impossible, but that the thing, in question, may be true;) he shall both gaine little himself, and enable him also lesse, to gaine, with whome he deales. But, on the other side, if he haue Humilitie, he may be well out of feare, that our Lord will euer permit, that either the one, or the other, shall be deceaued.

But now, concerning this Father, of whome I speake, as our Lord hath giuen him experience, in manie things: so hath he also endeauoured, to acquire all that, which may be gotten by studie, in this kind. And whesoeuer his owne experience falls short, he informes himself by their meanes, who haue more. And heer, our Lord comes to assist him, by giuing him a great proportion of Faith; and by this meanes, he hath done very much good, both to his owne Soule, and those also of others; and mine, is one of them. For, our B. Lord, considering the manie afflictions, which I was to endure, it seemes would prouide, that sice some of them would be brought vpon me by such as were to gouerne my Soule, there yet, might

might be others found, who would helpe me, to goe through with those troubles, and assist me much.

But as for this Religious man, of whome I haue spoken so much, our Lord hath so entirely changed him, that, vpon the matter, he is no longer to be knowne, for the man he was. He hath now also, giuen him much corporall strēgth, whereby he is now enabled to doe Pennance, which was impossible for him, before; for, he was euer sicklie. And he is also full of courage, towards the performing of anie thing, which is good; and besides, he hath varietie of other excellent things, which make it well appeare, that his Vocation came most particularly, from our Lord; And let him be Blessed, for euer.

For my part, I beleiue, that all this good is come to him, by the Fauours, which our Lord hath done him in Prayer; for they are not painted things, or put loosely on; but our Lord hath been pleased, to haue him brought to the Touch; and he hath proued therein, as one, who vnderstands very well, the true value of that merit, which is gotten by the well suffering of persecutions. And I trust in the greathes of our Lord, that much good will accrue to some of his Order, by his meanes; yea and euen to the whole Order it self. Already this beginnes to be vnderstood; and my self haue seen great Visions; and our Lord hath told me some particulars, both of him, and of the Rector of the Colledge of the *Societie of*

IESVS, of whome I ſpake; and they are things of great admiration; as alſo of two other Religious men, of *S. Dominick's Order*; but eſpecially of one; for whoſe proceeding, and profit, in the way of Spirit, our Lord hath already manifeſted ſome things to the world, by reall proofe. I had alſo heard formerly of him; but they are manie inſtances, which concerne the perſon, of whome I ſpake before; and one of them, I will heer recount.

I was once with him, in a *Locutorie*, or Speaking-place of a Monaſterie; and ſo very great, was the loue of Almightie God, which my Soule, and Spirit vnderſtood, to be euen burning, in his, that I was euen, as it were, abſorpt by it. For I went conſidering the greatneſſes of Almightie God, and in how ſhort a time he had ſublimed a Soule, to ſo admirable a State. He put me to much confuſion, when I heard him giue eare, with ſo great humilitie, to thoſe things, which I would ſometimes be ſaying to him concerning Prayer; I, who had ſo little to ſay thereof, to ſuch a perſon, as he was. But our Lord was content to endure it, through the earneſt deſire I had, to ſee him a great Proficient, in that kind. And it did me ſo much good, to be with him, that ſtill he ſeemed to inflame my Soule, with new fire, and with new deſires, to ſerue our Lord, euen as if I had been but then to beginne.

O my deare IESVS! what things are they, which a Soule can doe, when it is all inflamed

with

with thy loue? and we ought to esteem such an ne, very much, and humbly beseech our Lord, o let it continue long, in this world. For, whosoever ownes the same kind of loue, should follow such a kind of Soule, as fast as he can. It is matter of much comfort to a sick man, to find another, who is toucht, and tainted, by the same disease; for it serues him, in the way of some consolation, o see, at least, that he is not alone. They helpe one another excellently well, both to suffer, and to merit; They ioyne back, to back, and so support, and succour one another, like valiant, and resolued persons, to venture a thousand liues, for the loue of Almightie God; and, They aspire to no other happines, then to meet with some such occasion, as wherein they may offer themselues in Sacrifice, for his Seruice. They are like gallant Souldiers; who, to the end, that they may gaine the Spoile of their Enemies, and so grow rich, by that meanes, desire, that there may still be Warres; as vnderstanding, that there is no way, for them, to thriue, but by that meanes; for it is no lesse, then their very occupation, to labour, and to suffer.

O what a great thing it is, when our Lord giues light to know, how much is gained, by suffering for him? This point is not vnderstood, well, and home, till all be giuen ouer, and left. For, whosoeuer keepes anie thing to himself, giues a signe, that he esteemes it to be worth somewhat. And if he esteem it worth somewhat,

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it will be neceſſarie for him, to be ſorrie to leaue it. But now heer, all is imperfect, yea and euen loſt; and heer comes the Prouerbe well in, that He is a kind of loſt man, who lookes after that, which is loſt. And what greater loſſe, and perdition; what greater blindnes; what greater miſerie, and misfortune can there be, then to put a great value vpon that, which is abſolutly worth nothing at all?

But (to returne, to what I was ſaying) when I was extreamly ioyed, by conſidering the Soule of that man, (wherein it ſeemes, that our Bleſſed Lord was diſpoſed, that I ſhould clearly ſee thoſe treaſures, which he had depoſitated therein) and diſcerning alſo the high fauour, which he vouchſafed to doe me, in regard, that it had hapned by my meanes, I found my ſelf very vnworthie of it; but withall, I held thoſe Fauours, which our Lord had been pleaſed to doe him, in a much higher kind of account, then if he had vouchſafed them to my ſelf. And I payd our Lord an abundance of praiſe, to ſee, that his Diuine Maieſtie went ſo fulfilling my deſires, and vouchſafed to heare my prayer; which was, that he would vouchſafe, to ſtirre-vp ſuch kindes of perſons, to his faithfull Seruice.

And my Soule being then in ſuch condition, as that it could no longer beare ſo great ioy, ſhe went directly out of her ſelf, and loſt her verie ſelf, to be the greater gainer by it. She loſt, I ſay, thoſe cogitations, and conſiderations, and the

hearing

hearing of that Diuine toung, in which the Holie-Ghoſt ſeemed to ſpeake; and then I fell into a great Rapt, which made me, at it were, forgoe the vſe of my Senees, though it laſted but a very little while.

I ſaw Chriſt our Lord, with an exceſſiue kind of Maieſtie, and Glorie, expreſſing much contentment, in that which paſſed there. And ſo himſelf was pleaſed to tell me, as alſo, that I might ſee very clearly, that he loued to be euer preſent, at ſuch diſcourſes; and how much he eſteemes himſelf to be ſerued, in that men take ſuch delight, to ſpeake of him.

Another time, when I was farre off from hence, I ſaw him lifted-vp by Angells, with much glorie; and I vnderſtood by this Viſion, that his Soule was aduancing apace.

But ſo it was, that a certaine perſon in the world, to whome he had done much good, and repaired ſome breaches in his reputation, and giuen alſo comfort to his Soule, did yet raiſe a great falſe teſtimonie againſt the honour of this holie man; and he endured it, with much contentment, as he alſo did other perſecutions; and performed manie actions, which were greatly for the Seruice of Almightie God. Me thinkes, it is not fitt, to declare more of theſe things, at this preſent. If afterward your Reuerence ſhall thinke otherwiſe (becauſe your ſelf knowes, what they are already) they may alſo be ſet downe heer, for the glorie of Almightie God.

But

But now, of all theſe things, which I haue deliuered, about the Prophecies concerning this Houſe; and of others, which I ſhall alſo relate; as alſo of ſeuerall inſtances, in different kindes; they were all accompliſhed, and fulfilled, about a matter of ſome three yeares, before they were knowne; ſome more, and ſome leſſe; as our Lord had declared them to me. And I euer told them ouer; to my Ghoſtlie Father, and to this Widdow, my freind, to whome I had leaue to impart them, as I haue ſayd; and I vnderſtand, that ſhe told them yet to others; and they all know well, that I lye not. Nor will Almightie God, I hope, permit me to be euer ſo miſerable, as, in anie thing, to ſpeake other, then truth; and much leſſe, when it concernes things of ſuch importance.

But a Brother-in-Law of mine, dying ſuddainly, and I being much troubled at it (becauſe he had not had time, to Confeſſe before,) it was told me, in my Prayer, that my Siſter would alſo dye, after that manner; and therefore, that I ſhould goe thither, and procure to diſpoſe her to dye well. I told this, to my Ghoſtlie Father; and he not permitting me to goe, I heard the ſelf-ſame thing againe, and againe. But when now I told him thus much, he willed me to goe; and ſayd, that nothing would be loſt, by the bargaine. This Siſter of mine, was at a houſe of hers, in the Countrie, & I, going thither, to viſit her, without telling her of the particular cauſe, I gaue her the beſt light I could, concerning all things; and I perſwaded

waded her to goe often to Confeſſion, and, in ll things, to keep the accounts of her Conſcience, ery right, & ſtreight. As for her, ſhe was a very ertuous woeman; and did, as ſhe was deſired, or foure or fiue yeares togeather, before her end; nd then ſhe dyed, vpon a ſuddaine, without eing ſo much as viſited, and much leſſe Confeſ- ed. But the happines was, that, according to the uſtome which ſhe had held, there was little nore, then eight dayes expired, after her laſt Confeſſion. This made me a very glad woeman, vhen I knew of her death; and ſhe ſtayed a very hort time, in Purgatorie. Nor is it yet aboue eight layes, ſince our Lord appeared to me, after I had eceaued the Bleſſed Sacrament, and was pleaſed, o let me ſee, how he carried my Siſters ſoule, nto glorie.

In all theſe yeares, from the time, when the particular, concerning her, was told me, till her very death, I forgot not that, which had been giuen me to be vnderſtood, concerning her; as neither alſo, did my Companion. For, as ſoone as ſhe had heard of my Siſters death, ſhe came to- wards me, with much admiration, to ſee, how all had been fulfilled, Let our Lord be praiſed for euer, who vouchſafes to take ſuch care of Soules, to the end, that they may not periſh; Amen.

THE

THE FIVE AND THIRTIETH CHAPTER.

She proſecutes the ſame Diſcourſe, about the Foundation of this Houſe, of our Glorious Father, S. Ioſeph. She ſpeakes of the degrees, by vvhich our Lord came to appoint, that holie Pouertie should be ordained there; and of the cauſe, vvhy she came from that Ladie, vvith vvhome she vvas; and of other things alſo, vvhich ſucceeded.

BVt now, whilſt I was with that Ladie, of whome I haue ſpoken, and with whome I had remained, more then half a yeare, our Lord did ordaine, that a certaine holie woeman of our Order, ſhould come from a place, which was no leſſe, then three-ſcore and then leagues off from this; and to ariue heer; and to lengthen her way, by ſome leagues, on purpoſe, to ſpeak with me. Our Lord had moued her to this, in the ſelf-ſame yeare, when he moued me, to make another Monaſterie of this Order. And as ſoone as ſhe had entertained this deſire, ſhe ſold what ſoeuer ſhe poſſeſſed, and went her ſelf, bare-foot to Rome, to get, and bring-away the Diſpatch of this Buſines. This woeman, is a perſon of much Pennance, and Prayer; and our Lord did her many Fauours; and our B. Ladie appeared to her

and required her, ſtill to doe, what ſhe was doing; and ſhe ſerued our Bleſſed Lord, ſo incomparably beyond anie thing that I could doe, that I was in confuſion, euen to appeare in her preſence. She ſhewed me the Diſpatches, which ſhe brought from Rome; and, in thoſe fifteen dayes, which ſhe ſtayd with me, we tooke order, how we would make theſe Monaſteries; and, till I had ſpoken with her, it neuer had come to my knowledge, that our Rule, till it was relaxed, did euer command, that none of the Religious Houſes of our Order, ſhould haue anie proprietie, in anie goods. Nor had my ſelf had anie purpoſe, to found anie Monaſterie at all, without Reuenue; for, my intention was, that we ſhould be free from the care of procuring anie ſuch thing, as we might be in neceſſitie, to vſe.

But this Bleſſed Woeman, hauing been inſtructed by our Lord, was growne to vnderſtand that truth, very well, without being able ſo much, as to read; of which truth, I was ignorant, euen after haueing taken ſo much paines, to read ouer the Conſtitutions of our Order. And as ſoone, as ſhe acquainted me with her purpoſe, I liked it well; though yet, I was afrayd, that it would not be yeilded to; but that they would ſay perhaps, that theſe were but impertinencies; and wiſh, that I would not doe anie thing, whereby others might be put to ſuffer, through my fault. Though yet, in very deed, if I had been alone, I would not haue been detained one minute, from doe-

ing it; since it would be a Regalo, to my Soule, to obserue, & follow the Counsailes of *Iesus-Christ* our Lord; for really, his Diuine Maiestie had already giuen me great desires, to obserue Pouertie. So that, for my part, I made no doubt, but that this was best; yea and I had long desired, that it might be possible, and compatible with my state, that I might goe begging my bread; for the loue of God, without hauing so much, as a house, or anie thing els. But only, I was in feare, that if our Blessed Lord should not giue the self-same desires to others, which he gaue to me, they would liue, perhaps, with disgust; and consequently, that it might proue a cause of some distraction, or diuision. For I saw, that there were some poore Monasteries, which liued not with much recollection; and I considered not, that their not being recollected, was the cause of their being so poore; and not their Pouertie, the cause of their want of Recollection. For, distraction makes them not more rich; nor is euer Almightie God wanting to such, as serue him. In fine, my Faith was weake; which that, of this Seruant of God, was not.

But now I, (who would be taking the opinion of so manie persons, for euerie thing, which I was to doe) could find no bodie of this minde; no nor euen my Ghostlie Father himself; nor yet those other learned men, whome I consulted in the case; but they brought me so manie reasons against it, that I knew not, which way to turne my self. For I, for my part, who knew already,

that

nat it was the Rule of the order, and knew also, nat it was a point of more perfection, could not erſwade my ſelf, to haue Reuenue. And though ometimes, they conuinced me, towards their o-inion, yet ſtill, when I returned to Prayer, and onſidered Chriſt our Lord, ſo very poore, and aked, vpon the Croſſe, I was not able, ſo much s to find patience, for being rich. But I humbly eſought him with teares, to ordaine things, in ich ſort, that I might be poore, like him. And I ound ſo manie inconueniences, euen in hauing euenue, and found it to be ſo great a cauſe of iſquiet, yea and euen of diſtraction alſo, that I id nothing but diſpute the buſines, with thoſe earned men. I wrote alſo about it, to that Reli-ious man, of *S. Dominick's Order*, who aſſiſted s; and he ſent me two ſheets of Paper; which e had written, by way of contradiction, to me; nd he grounded himſelf in *Theologie*, for the per-vading me, not to doe it; yea and he told me, nat he had ſtudied the point very well. To which anſwered him, that, for not following my Vo-ation, and for not performing the Vow, which I ad made of Pouertie, and embracing the Coun-iles of Chriſt our Lord, in all perfection, I neant not to make vſe of his *Theologie*, nor of his earning; and therefore, that in this caſe, he might e pleaſed to excuſe me.

For my part, I was very glad, when I found nie Creature, who woud helpe me; and the adie, with whome I was, aſſiſted me particular-

ly, heerin. There were others alſo, who told me inſtantly, at the firſt, that they liked it well; but afterward, when they conſidered it better, they found ſo manie inconueniences, in it, that they were earneſt, in perſwading me, not to proceed therein. But now, I told them heervpon, that if they changed their opinion ſo ſoone, I would hold my ſelf faſt, to the firſt.

At this time, vpon my entreatie, and becauſe this Ladie had neuer ſeen that holie man *Fray Pedro de Alcantara*, our Lord was pleaſed, that he ſhould come to her houſe; and he being ſo great a louer of Pouertie, and hauing obſerued, and practiſed it, ſo manie yeares, was not ignorant of the riches, which it contained; and ſo he aſſiſted me much; and commanded me, that I ſhould, by no meanes, forbeare, to carrie-on my deſire. And now, through his opinion, and helpe (he being a perſon, who could beſt giue counſaile in it, as vnderſtanding the matter in hand, by long experience) I reſolued, that I would goe ſeeking no further. And being, one day, recommending the matter earneſtly to Chriſt our Lord, it pleaſed him, to tell me expreſly, That I ſhould, by no meanes, forbeare, to make the Monaſterie, poore: That this was both his Father's will, and his; and That he would help me in it. Now, there were ſo great effects heerof, in a Rapt, which I had, that I could, by no meanes, doubt, but that it was of Almightie God. Another time, he told me, that there was confuſion, in hauing Reuenue; and he

ſayd

ayd alſo other things, in praiſe of Pouertie; aſſuring me, that no ſuch thing, as was neceſſarie for he life of man, ſhould euer be wanting, to ſuch s ſerue him; of which want (as I was ſaying) I euer was in feare, for my part. Our Lord did lſo turne the hart of the Religious man of *S. Dominick's Order*, of whome I ſayd, that he wrote, o forbid me to make the Monaſterie without Reuenue. And now I was very well pleaſed, vpon the vnderſtanding of this; and vpon hauing alſo got ſome other Votes, me thought I poſſeſſed all the riches in the world; by reſoluing to liue on Almes, for the loue of our Lord.

About this time, did my Prouinciall diſcharge his commandment vnder Obedience, which he had impoſed vpon me, for ſtaying there; and left it in mine owne choyce, either to returne, or els to ſtay, for a certaine time. But there was now, an Election of a Prioreſſe, to be made, in our Monaſterie; and they aduertiſed me, that there were manie, who deſired to impoſe that Charge vpon me; whereof the onlie thought, was of ſo great torment to me, that I could eaſily haue reſolued my ſelf, to endure anie other Martyrdome in the whole world, for the loue of God; but, by no meanes, perſwade my ſelf to this. For, beſides the great trouble, in regard, that they are ſo very manie in the Houſe, (which point I neuer liked) and for other reaſons alſo, which did occurr (beſides, that I neuer loued to haue Office, but did euer refuſe them all) it ſeemed to me, that it was to put

my Conſcience it ſelf, in great hazard. And ſo bleſſed Almightie God, for my not being preſent in the place; & I wrote alſo, to ſome freinds o mine, that they would not giue me their Vote.

But when now, I was ſo much pleaſed, not t find my ſelf there, in that noiſe, our Lord tol me, that I ſhould by no meanes forbeare to goe And that, ſince I deſired a Croſſe, there was now a good great one, prouided for me; and tha I muſt not throw it away, but goe on, with reſo lution, and courage; and that he would help me and therefore that I muſt inſtantly goe. At this, was mightily troubled, and did nothing bu weepe; for I thought, it had been the Croſſe o being Superiour; and (as I was ſaying before) could not perſwade my ſelf, that this could poſ ſibly be good, for my Soule, in anie kind; no could I find anie reaſon at all, to induce me to it I related all this Storie, to my Ghoſtlie Father; and he commanded me to be gone; for it was euident ly, of more perfection, to doe ſo; but only, be cauſe the heates were great, I might yet ſtay where I was, ſome few dayes; for feare, leaſt els the iourney might doe me harme; and that, in ſubſtance, it would ſuffice, if I were there, wher the Election ſhould be made.

But, our Bleſſed Lord hauing ordered things otherwiſe, the buſines of my iourney, was in ſtantly to be diſpatched, and done. For, the reſt leſnes which I had in my ſelf, was very great, togeather with my euen wanting power, to make my

my Prayer; and it seemed also to me, withall, that I fell short, in the performance of what our Blessed Lord had expresly commanded me; and the while, I did but passe my time there, in ease, and pleasure; That it might seem, as if I had no minde at all, to labour, and suffer; and That all, was, vpon the matter, but talking, whensoeuer there grew to be question of seruing Almightie God. For els, I being able to be, where it was more perfection for me to find my self, why did I forbeare to effect it? And if I should dye, by the way; in God's name, let me dye. But, in the meane time, (besides all the rest) I found my self, with a great pressing vpon my verie hart; and our Lord, had wholy depriued me, of all kind of gust, in my Prayer. In a word, I was brought to such a condition, as that now, I was in a great deale of torment; and I humbly prayed the Ladie, where I was, that she would allow me her leaue, to be gone. For already my Ghostlie Father, when he found me to be in that case, willed me also, to beginne my iourney; and our Lord had also moued him, as well as me. But the Ladie had so great a sense of trouble, for my departure, that the same, grew also to be another torment to me. For, she spoke, of how much trouble it had cost her, to obtaine this fauour of leaue, at the hands of the Prouincial, by meanes of a great deale of importunitie. And really, I held it for a kind of very strange thing, that she would be content, to giue way, herein; considering, how very much,

ſhe was troubled at it; ſaue only, that I conſidered her, as a very great Seruant of Almightie God. And ſo, I telling her once, that my going, imported his Seruice much, with manie other things, of that kinde; and letting her alſo know, that it was poſſible, that I might returne to ſee her againe, ſhe grew (with trouble enough) to be yet content, at laſt, that I ſhould goe.

But now I, for mine owne part, had no difficultie at all, in doing it. For, when once I came to vnderſtand, that the thing was of more perfection; and that it more imported the Seruice of Almightie God, that I ſhould goe, then ſtay, I did (by the contentment, which it gaue me, to content him) paſſe eaſily ouer, the paine of leauing that Ladie, whome I ſaw ſo much troubled, at my iourney; as manie other perſons alſo were, to whome I was obliged there, very much; and eſpecially to my Ghoſtlie Father, who was of *the Societie of* IESVS; for, I found my ſelf very happie, in him. But yet, when I ſaw, that I was to want that comfort, for the loue of our Lord, it gaue me contentment, to looſe him. And yet ſtill, I could not well vnderſtand, how this might be. For I ſaw plainly, that theſe contraryes, were in me, at once: To be delighted, To be comforted, and To be ioyed, by that, which yet, did coſt me ſorrow, at the verie hart. For, on the one ſide, I was eaſed, and accommodated, with meanes, and time, to haue manie howers of Prayer; and on the other, I ſaw plainly, that I was to caſt my ſelf, into a kind of

of fire. For already, our Lord had foretold me, as much; and that I went to vndergoe, and carrie a heauie Croſſe; though yet, indeed, I neuer conceiued, that it could poſſibly haue proued ſo very heauie, as I found it to be, afterward. But yet, howſoeuer, I went ſo chearfully on, that I accounted my ſelf euen to be deſtroyed, in regard, that I could not caſt my ſelf, inſtantly, into the battaile, ſince our Lord had a minde, that I ſhould vndertake it; and ſo, his Diuine Maieſtie gaue me ſtrength; and fetched it, euen out of my verie weaknes. I knew not well, (I ſay,) how this could be; but yet I grew to thinke vpon this Compariſon. If, I poſſeſſing ſome rich Iewell, or anie thing els, which gaue me great contentment, it ſhould happen to me, to know, that ſome perſon, whome I loued, euen better then my ſelf, deſired to haue it, and that I aſpired more, to content him, then to pleaſe my ſelf, it would fall out, in that caſe, that I ſhould enioy more contentment, without that verie thing, then I enioyed before, by the poſſeſſion thereof, ſince it proued to giue contentment to that perſon. And therefore now, ſince the contentment, which I haue in contenting him, exceeds mine owne proper contentment, the trouble, which I might haue, by wanting the Iewell, or euen anie other thing, which I could loue, were taken away; and ſo alſo, would the ſenſe of that contentment be, which it gaue me before. So that, howſoeuer I ſhould haue been in paine, to leaue ſuch perſons, as were ſo

greatly troubled for my parting from them (the rather, in regard, that I am, euen in condition, and nature, so very gratefull, for the Fauours, which are done me, and therefore this accident, if it had ariued, at some other time, would haue afflicted me much) yet now, the case was such, that I could not be troubled at it, euen though I would. It fell out also, in verie deed, to import so very much, that I should not haue stayd there, one day longer, for as much, as concernes the busines of this Blessed House, that I know not, how it could possibly haue been concluded, if I had not gone away, iust at that time.

O greatnes of Almightie God! for I am euen amazed, when I consider it. But now, I discerne very well, that his Diuine Maiestie, had a particular care, to helpe me; to the end, that we might settle, and secure, this poore little Corner * of God. For really, I hold it to be such; and that it is a Habitation, wherein his Diuine Maiestie is delighted; as he told me himself once, when I was in Prayer, That this House was euen the verie Paradise, of his delight. And so, very agreably to this, he hath brought certaine Soules hither, in whose companie now I liue, with very great * confusion to my self. For it would not haue been in my power, to haue so much as wished for such, as they are, in order to this holie end; they being persons of so great Austerity, and Pouertie, and Prayer; and carrying all this weight, with such a deale of contentment, and gust, that there is not one

Our Blessed Lord, is still as good as his word.

The great Charity, & Humility of the Saynt.

one Creature, in all the Companie, who doth not hold her self, for wholy vndeseruing, to haue approached to such a place, as this; and especially some, in particular, whome our Lord was pleased, to call, from out of the gallanterie, and vanitie of the world; where (according to the lawes of this life) they might haue had contentment enough. But now, our Blessed Lord hath giuen them the same contentment, so farre enlarged, and encreased, as makes it to be most clearly seen, That euen heer, they haue a hundred, for one, in comparison of what they left, for his sake. And now they can neuer satisfye themselues, with giuing him most humble thankes, for so high a Fauour. He hath also changed others, from good, to better. To such, as are very young, he giues both courage, and knowledge; to the end, that they may desire nothing els; and that they may truly vnderstand, that, to be seuered from all things of this life, is euen heer, a verie enioying, of more repose. To them, who are of more yeares, and lesse health, he giues such a degree of strength, as that they may be able to endure the same austerities of Pennance, which the rest of the Communitie vndergoes.

O my deare Lord! and how well doth it now appeare, that thou art powerfull? Nor is there anie need, to seek out reasons, and wayes, for thy doing, whatsoeuer thou desirest. For euen, aboue the Discourse of our Naturall Reason, thou makest all things very possible; and giuest vs to vnderstand very

very well, that, in fine, we haue need of no more, then to loue thee, in good earneſt; and to leaue all things, in good earneſt, for thee. But indeed, it muſt be done, in good earneſt; to the end, that thou, O my Lord, and my God, maiſt make all things eaſie to vs. And heer, it may come handſomly in, that thou doſt, but as it were, feigne, or counterfeit, the infuſion of a kind of difficultie, vpon the obſeruing of thy Law. For, as for me, I cannot find, O my Lord, where indeed, that difficultie is; nor how that way can be accounted ſtrict, or hard, which conducts vs to thee. But I rather plainely ſee, that it is a faire, and Royall way; and no obſcure, and paltrie little path; but a way wherein euerie bodie goes ſafe, who will put himſelf, in good earneſt, vpon the iourney. For, all doubtfull paſſages, and rocks, wherein one may be in danger to catch a Fall, are found to be very farre off, from hence; in regard, that heer we are ſo very remote, from all occaſions of Sinne. But I call that other, a path, and a wicked path; and a narrow, and very dangerous way; which, on the one ſide, hath a huge deep valley, into which one may fall; and on the other, a hideous rock, with a precipice, from whence, vpon a verie inſtant, ere he be aware, he may breake his neck, and his bones, into a thouſand peices.

He, who loues thee, O thou, my eternall Good, with realitie of truth, goes ſecurely, by a Royall, ſafe, and large way; which lyes farre from all ſuch precipices of danger. And no ſooner hath

hath such an one, tript neuer so little, but instantly, thou, O Lord, lendest him thy hand, to helpe him vp. Nor will, euen a Fall, nor manie Falls, be his ruine, if he loue thee, and not the things of this world. Such an one, walkes by the Valley of Humilitie; nor am I able to vnderstand, why anie Creature should be afrayd, to put himself into this way of Perfection. And I beseech our Blessed Lord, (euen by what he is) that he will giue vs rightly to vnderstand, how ill, that securitie is, which we looke for, in the midst of such manifest dangers, as where, one is to be still, trudging on, in the ranke, and row of the world; and that we may beleiue, our true securitie, and safetie, to consist, in our procuring, to be still going on, in the way of doing Seruice, to Almightie God. Away, away; let vs all fix our eyes vpon him; and let vs not haue anie feare, that this Sunne of Iustice, will set, or euer permit vs, to walke in such sort, by night, as that we may grow to be lost, vnlesse we first resolue to leaue him. Nor let vs feare to walke, euen in the midst of Lyons, of whome, euerie one seemes greedie, to be carrying-away his seuerall peice; and these are certaine things, which the world is wont to call, by the name of Honours, and great Estates, and Delights. And the Diuel, on the other side, seemes also willing heer, to fright vs, with certaine friuolous toyes. A * thousand times ouer, I am amazed; and ten thousand times, would I desire, euen to dissolue my self, with powring forth my teares; & to cry-out

* *How deuout, this deare Sayntis*

out to the whole world, all at once, to proclaime mine owne great wickednes, and blindnes; so to try, if that, might doe anie good, towards the making men, at last, open their eyes. Let him open them, through his owne infinit goodnes, who knowes how to doe it; and not permit, that euer mine, may turne blind againe, Amen.

THE SIX AND THIRTIETH CHAPTER.

She prosecutes the Subiect, vvhich she had begunne; and declares the finall conclusion of the Foundation of this Monasterie of the Glorious S. Ioseph, of Auila; *and of the great contradictions, and persecutions, vvhich the Religious vvoemen vvere put to suffer, euen after they had taken the Habit; and of the manie troubles, and temptations, vvhich she vvas faine to vndergoe; and hovv his Diuine Maiestie drevv her out of all, vvith victorie, to his ovvne praise, and glorie.*

BEing parted from that Cittie, where I was, I passed with much contentment, by the way, resoluing to vndertake, and goe through, with all things, which our Lord should be pleased to lay vpon me; and that, with a most franke, and entire submission, of my whole hart. Now, the selfe-

same

ſame night, when I ariued at *Auila*, our Diſpatch, with the *Breue* from *Rome*, ariued alſo there. So that, I was amazed at it; and ſo alſo were all they, who knew of the haſt, wherewith our Lord had ſollicited me, to come away; when they alſo knew withall, the great neceſſitie, which there was thereof, and the coniuncture alſo otherwiſe, which appeared then. For, I found the Biſhop there, and that holie man, *Fray Pedro de Alcantara*, and a certaine Caualier alſo, a very great Seruant of our Lord, in whoſe houſe, that holie man *Fray Pedro*, was lodged. For, that Caualier, was a perſon, with whome, generally, the Seruants of Almightie God, were euer wont, to find a ſafe retreat. Now, both thoſe perſons, ioyning togeather, obtained ſo much, at the Biſhop's hands, as that he was content to admit of the Monaſterie; which was not a thing of ſmall importance, conſidering that it muſt liue vpon Almes. But the Biſhop was really a freind to ſuch, as were indeed reſolued to ſerue our Lord; for inſtantly, he would apply himſelf to doe them fauour. But the approbation of that holie old man, and his dealing earneſtly, with ſeuerall perſons, to aſſiſt vs, was the thing, which made an end of the worke.

If I had not chanced to ariue in this verie coniuncture, as I haue ſayd, I know not, how the buſines could poſſibly haue been diſpatched; for, this holie man ſtayd a very little while, heer; and I thinke, not aboue eight dayes; and euen then, he was very ill, at eaſe; and ſhortly after that time,

time, our Lord tooke him out of the world, to himself. And it seemed indeed, that his Diuine Maiestie had preserued him, in this world, till iust this busines might be dispatched; for it had been long, (th at is, I thinke, a matter of two yeares,) since he had been very ill, in point of health.

But all that, which they resolued now, was to be gouerned with a great deale of secrecie; for els, nothing would haue taken effect; so ill was the people conceited of it, as appeared afterward. Now, our Lord disposed things so, that a Brother-in-Law of mine, should be sick, at that verie time; and that his wife should not be heer; but that he must be in so very great need of helpe, that they gaue me leaue to goe, and be with him; and so by occasion of that, there was nothing knowne howsoeuer somewhat grew to be suspected, concerning some persons, though yet it were not fully beleiued. And it is a thing, to make men wonder how my Brother-in-Law, continued no longer sick, then seemed to be iust necessarie, for our busines; and should recouer his health, iust as soone as it was fitt; to the end, that so, both I might be disengaged, and he might leaue his house free. But our Lord, as I was saying, did instantly restore his health; at which, the Patient was in wonder. Yet euen then, had I difficulties enough to procure, by meanes of manie different persons, to make them giue way, that the busines might goe forward; and, both with the sick man, and with the workmen, that the House might be

finished.

finished, out of hand; and be put into the Forme of a Monasterie. For, there was very much of it vnfinished, at that time; and my Companion was then, not heer; for we held it indeed more conuenient, that she should be absent, for the better hiding of the busines; and I saw, that it was of extreame importance, that all should be dispatched, with diligence, for manie reasons; and for this, amongst the rest, because it was feared euerie hower, that they would send me away.

In the meane time, I had so manie occasions of vexation, and trouble, that I might haue cause to doubt, whether this were not that Crosse, whereof I was warned; though on the other side, it seemed, that this was but a little one, in comparison of that other great Crosse, which our Lord had formerly sayd, that I was to beare.

But yet, all being now concluded, our Lord was pleased, that some should take the Habit, vpon S.Bartholomews day; at which time, the B.Sacrament was exposed, with all the Solemnity, and deuotion, which we could possibly vse. And so, the Monasterie of our most Glorious Father *S.Ioseph*, fell out to be erected, and made, in the Yeare of our Lord God, One thousand, fiue hundred, seauentie two. And it came then, to my turne, (togeather with two others of our former Monasterie, who, by accident, were abroad, at that time) to giue them the Habit. But now, since the House where the Monastery fell out to be made, was that, wherein my Brother-in-Law, had dwelt

before, (for he, as I sayd, had bought it, the better to disguise this busines) I had leaue to stay there. And I did nothing at all, but by the opinion of learned men; that so I might be sure, not to depart, one haires breadth, from my Obedience. And when they saw, that the thing was to be so aduantagious to the whole Order, in manie respects, they told me, I might doe as I did; though yet, it were fitt to proceed with great reseruation, and secrecie; and to take care, that my Superiours might not know, what I was doing. For, how little soeuer the imperfection had been, which I must haue committed therein, I conceaue, that I would haue giuen-ouer the erecting, I say not, of one Monasterie, but of a thousand, rather then haue falne into it; and this, is certaine. And though I desired, to seuer my self, wholy, from the world, that so I might follow my Profession, and Calling, with more perfection, and Clausure, I desired it yet, in such sort, as that, whensoeuer I should come to vnderstand, that it was to be, for the greater Seruice of Almightie God, to giue it ouer, I would instantly haue been sure, to doe it, with entire peace, and repose.

But the while, it was a kind of being euen in glorie, for me, to see the B. Sacrament exposed; and that, foure poore * Orphans were prouided for, since they were taken without Dowrie; and they were very great Seruants of Almightie God. For, this was much endeauoured, at the beginning, that such persons should enter, and be receaued,

* *They were very noble, though they were poore.*

ceaued, as might lay a good foundation, by their example, for the better effecting the intention, and designe, which we had, to carrie all things on, with much perfection, and Prayer; and that such a worke, in fine, might be finished, as were to proue, for the Seruice of our Blessed Lord, and in honour of the Habit of his Glorious Mother; for vpon this, did all the anxieties of my care, worke, and beate. And it gaue me also great comfort, to haue done expressly that, which our Blessed Lord had been pleased to command me; and that there might be one Church more, (and the same be dedicated vnder the name of my Glorious Father, *S. Ioseph*) then there was before. Not yet, that I conceaued my self, to haue done anie thing in it, at all; for, I neuer had anie such conceipt; neither haue I yet; but I euer vnderstand, that it is our Blessed Lord, who did it; and that, as much as concerned my part, was accompanied with so great imperfections, that I rather plainly see, that there is much more, for which to blame me, then to thanke me. But yet I must confesse, that it goes with me for a great Regalo, to see, that his Diuine Maiestie was pleased to vse me, as an instrument (I being so very wicked, as I am) for so great a worke, as this. So that, in fine, I remained with much satisfaction, and gust, in this behalfe; and, as it were, euen out of my self, in great depth of Prayer.

But now, vpon the end of all this, which might last about some three, or foure howers, the Diuel

procured to giue me such a kind of Spirituall battaile, as I will now declare. He *represented to me a doubt, whether that, which I had done, had been well done; whether I had not gone against my obligation of Obedience, by procuring to effect certaine things, without hauing been directed therein, by my Prouinciall; That I might very well imagine, that my carriage had been of disgust to him, in regard, that I had submitted the busines, to the Ordinarie, and that, without hauing acquainted him with it, before; though yet, on the other side, it be true, that when he would not admit of the Foundation, and saw, that I did not alter my course, I might probably enough imagine, that he would not care much, though it went on; and Whether these new Religious would be content to liue in so great restraint; Whether, they were not to want bread, to eate; Whether the whole busines, were not an absurd, and foolish thing; and Who, in fine, must put me vpon it, since already I had a Monasterie of mine owne.

The Diuell is still, himselfe.

But now, all that, which our Blessed Lord had commanded me; and all those opinions of the learned men, whome I had consulted; and all the Prayer, which I had caused to be made, and that, in effect, without ceasing; yea and also for the space of more, then two whole yeares; all this, I say, was as absolutly slipped out of my memorie, as if it had neuer been there; and I only remembred now, that I did it according to mine owne opi-

opinion. But all the vertues, and Faith, which I had before, were ſuſpended in me then, without my hauing ſtrength, either to act anie thing, or euen ſo much, as to defend my ſelf, againſt ſo manie aſſaults.

The Diuel was alſo tampering with me, and examined me, how it came to paſſe, that I would needs goe ſhut my ſelf vp, in ſo ſtraight a Houſe; and that, with ſo manie infirmities vpon my back; and how I would be able to vndergoe ſo great Pennance, and giue ouer to liue, in ſo goodlie, and delightfull a place, as the other was, where I had alwaies had ſo much guſt, and ſo manie freinds; and perhaps, theſe others, would not proue ſo; That I had taken very much vpon me; That, perhaps, it would coſt me deſpaire, at the laſt; That the Diuel had pretended, but to depriue me of repoſe, and peace, that ſo I might not be able to frequent Prayer; and to make me grow diſordered, and diſturbed; and ſo, by thoſe degrees, to looſe my Soule.

Such things as theſe, aſſembled in ſuch ſort as I haue related, did the Diuel take care, to ſet before me; and ſo, as that it was not almoſt in my power, ſo much as once to thinke, of anie thing els; and by this meanes, did he bring ſuch an affliction, and obſcuritie, or rather downe-right darknes vpon my hart, as I am not able to expreſſe. But now, when I found my ſelf to be in this caſe, I went to viſit the Bleſſed Sacrament; though yet I was not able to recommend my Soule, to it; as

finding my self, in my opinion, with a certaine kind of profound affliction, as if then, I had been, in no lesse, then the verie agonie of death. To treat with anie bodie, about it, I was not yet to presume; for there was not yet so much, as a Ghostlie Father appointed for me. O my deare Lord! what a miserable kind of life is this, which we lead, where there is no secure contentment, nor anie thing, which is not subiect to change? It was so very very lately, that, me thought, I would not haue exchanged my condition (in the way of being content) with anie Creature of the whole world; and now, the self-same cause, euen of the self-same contentment, did so torment me, that I knew not what to doe with my self. O that we would looke, with attention, vpon the things of this world! for, euerie bodie would then be quickly able to find, by experience, how little he were to lodge, either his contentment, or discontentment, vpon it. It is most certaine, in my opinion, that this was one of the fiercest kind of fitts of affliction, that euer I had endured, in my whole life. And it seemes, as if my verie Spirit, had half prophecied, how, much did still rest behind, to be endured; though yet, that ariued not so farre, as this, if it had continued.

** This is such a kind of vvorld, as vvherein, things vvill euer goe thus.*

But now, our Blessed Lord did not permit this poore Seruant of his, to suffer long; nor did he euer faile, to succour me, in my tribulations; nor did he also, in this. For now he gaue me a little * light, wherewith to see, that all this, was

** A true answver to all the Diuells Obiections.*

of

of the Diuel; and that I might discerne the truth; and that the whole busines, was but to put me into a fright, by lyes; and so, I came, by degrees, to call to mind, and to recouer the great resolutions, which I had formerly conceaued, towards the Seruice of our Blessed Lord; as also my desires, to suffer for him. And so I grew also to consider, that if, really, I intended to fulfill them, I was not to busie my self, about procuring rest, and ease; but if I would endure afflictions, that this was the true way, to merit; and that, if I would goe through with them, for the Seruice of Almightie God, they would be in stead of Purgatorie, for me; & of what was I afrayd: & that, since I desired afflictions, these, which were offered now, would be very fitt, & good; and that, where the greatest contradiction was felt, the richest gaine would be found; and why should my hart faile me, for his Seruice, to whome I owed so much? And by these, and other considerations, and employing all the courage I had, I made a promise, in presence of the B. Sacrament, to doe all the verie vttermost, that I could, to get leaue to come to this Monasterie; as also, if I might doe it, with safe conscience, to promise Clausure.

But now, at my resoluing vpon this, the Diuel fled instantly away, and left me very quiet, and contented; and so I haue remained euer since. And all that, which is obserued in this House, either by way of Inclosure, or Pennance, in anie kind, hath made it self both very delightfull, and

seems very little. And the contentment, on the other side, is so extreamly great, that I am thinking, seuerall times, if I were able to find anie thing, in the whole world, which could be of so much gust to me, as this. I knew not also, whether, perhaps, euen this, might not be the true reason, why I enioy better health now, then euer; or els that, perhaps, our Lord would haue it so, because perhaps, there might be some necessarie vse thereof; and because it is but reason, that I should also doe those things, which are performed by all the rest; and therefore, that he is pleased, to giue me so much comfort, as to be able to doe it, though yet, it be with some little trouble. But certainly all they, who see it, and are priuie to the great infirmities, to which I am subiect, be amazed at it. Blessed be our Lord, who giues it all; and hath power enough, wherewith to doe it.

But I failed not, in the meane time, to be very well wearied, with such a stiffe contention, and strife, as this, though yet, I laughed at the Diuel; for I clearly saw, it was he. And I conceaue, that our Blessed Lord would permit it, because I neuer knew, till then, what it was, to be in anie disgust, for being a Religious woeman; Nor did I euer find anie, during the space of eight and twentie yeares, and more, that I had been one. But now, his Diuine Maiestie permitted it to come vpon me, to the end, that I might the better vnderstand the great Fauour, which it had pleased our Lord, to doe me in that State; yea and the torment, from which

which he had freed me; as alſo, to the end, that, if afterward I ſaw anie one, who ſhould be afflicted in the ſame kind, I might not be frighted at it, but might both haue compaſſion of her, and know alſo, how to giue her comfort, if there ſhould be cauſe.

But now hauing paſſed this brunt, and being deſirous to reſt a little, when I ſhould haue dined, (for, in all the night before, I had taken none; as alſo in manie other nights, I had not failed of care, and trouble enough, when yet I was alſo tired out, in the dayes; as they knew, very well, what paſſed, not only in the Monaſterie, but in the Cittie, there was growne, to be a great deale of noiſe, and diſquiet, vpon the occaſions, which haue been formerly touched, yea and there ſeemed, to be ſome coulour, for the ſame) iuſt then, the Prioreſſe required me, to be called; and that I muſt goe to her, at the inſtant. And meeting with her commandment, I left my Religious, full of paine, and care, and ſo, inſtantly, went to her. But I then perceaued well, that I was to be ſure of troubles enow; though yet the Houſe, being then diſpatched, I was not in very much paine. Howſoeuer, I betooke my ſelf to Prayer, beſeeching our Bleſſed Lord, to be good to me; and begging of my Father *S. Ioſeph*, that he would bring me back againe, to his Houſe; and, in the meane time, I offered-vp all that, which I might chance to endure, for his ſake; and I was to be very well pleaſed, if it fell out, that I might ſuffer

anie thing for him, or be able to ſerue him. And ſo I went away, with opinion, that they would inſtantly commit me to Priſon. Whereby I yet conceaue, that they would ſo, haue done me, a great deale of pleaſure; for then, I ſhould not haue been vexed with their talking; and I ſhould haue enioyed a little Solitude, whereof I was in very great want; for they had euen, as it were, grinded me to duſt, by forcing me, to conuerſe ſo long, with ſuch a multitude of people.

But being then ariued, and hauing giuen account of my ſelf, to the Superiour, ſhe was a little appeaſed; and they all agreed, to ſend me to the Prouincial; and ſo the Cauſe was to depend, before him. And as ſoone, as I was come thither, for Iudgement, I found my ſelf with much contentment, to ſee, that I was ſuffering ſomewhat, for the loue of our Lord. For, as for hauing done anie thing, either againſt his Diuine Maieſtie, or yet againſt the Order, I conceaued not, that I had offended, but rather had endeauoured to augment it, to the vttermoſt of my power; and would be glad, with my whole hart, to dye for it. For, all my deſires were, that it might be fulfilled, according to the vttermoſt perfection. But in the meane time, I called to minde the Sentence, which was paſſed vpon Chriſt our Lord; and I acknowledged, what a Nothing this was, in reſpect of his. I accuſed my ſelf then, as in fault, yea and as very faultie; and ſo I make no doubt, but I was, in the opinions of all them, who knew not very

very much, of the Cause. And after they had giuen me a great reprehension, (though not yet, with so much rigour, as the fault might seem to deserue; and as manie of them told the Prouincial, that I had committed) I was absolutly, for my part, resolued, to hold on this course. And so I rather desired, that they should pardon me; and then punish me, if they would; but by no meanes, remaine vnkinde, or ill-affected, towards me.

In some things, I plainly saw, that they had no reason at all, against me; but that they condemned me, without cause; as when they sayd, I had done, whatsoeuer I had done, to the end, that I might be held in great opinion, and to be talked of; and such other toyes, as that. But in others, I saw clearly, that they sayd true; as namely, that I was much worse, then the rest; and that, since I had not kept the Obseruances of that House, which were maintained, with so much pietie, and deuotion there, how could I come to thinke of performing another Rule, of more rigour? and, that this, was but to raise-vp nouelties in the world, and to scandalize the people.

But yet, all this, caused no tumult in my hart, nor put mee to anie paine at all; though yet I shewed to be in some; least otherwise, they might conceaue, that I vndervalued what they sayd. But, in fine, the Prouincial commanded me, to giue account of my self, to them of the former Monastery, and that I must necessarily doe it. And so, being at great peace within my self; and

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our Lord assisting me therein; I gaue such a discharge of my actions, as that neither the Prouincial, nor the Religious Woemen, who were in that Assemblie, found anie thing, for which to condemne me. After this, I spoke more plainly to him, in priuate; and I did it also more at large; and he was very well satisfyed with me; and promised me, that, if the Cittie should proceed towards a being quiet againe, he would giue me leaue to goe to my Monasterie. But the disorder, and distemper of the Cittie, was so very great, as I shall now declare.

Within two or three dayes, after that time, the Gouernour, and other Magistrates of the Towne, and some also of the Chapter of the Cathedrall Church, mett togeather; and they all declared ioyntly, That, by no meanes, they must permit the worke, to goe forward; That it would result, to the euidēt disaduantage of the Common-Wealth; That they must not faile, to remoue the B. Sacrament, from thence; and, by no meanes, permit the busines, to proceed. One onlie Doctour of *S. Dominick's Order*, although he were of a contrarie opinion to vs (I meane not, in that point of the Monasterie, but in that other, of being incapable of Reuenue, and Poore) sayd, that there was no cause, why the House should instantly be dissolued, after that manner, but that it ought to be well considered; That there would be time enough, for this; That it was a Case, which belonged to the Bishop; and diuerse other things, of this

this kind, which did very much good to the busines. For, considering how great the furie of the people was, it was happie, that they did not put the dissoluing of the House, presently, in execution. And this shewed, that the thing, in fine, was to take effect; and that our Blessed Lord, was pleased, to haue it so; and that they all could doe little, against his will, and pleasure; but yet, they all assigned their reasons, and expressed good zeale, in what they sayd. And yet thus, without their giuing offence to Almightie God, they made both me, and diuerse others suffer, who fauoured the Busines.

The tumultuous dispositon of the people, was so great, that now there was no talke of anie thing els; and they all agreed, in condemning me; and in going to complaine of me, to the Prouincial, and to my Monasterie. As for me, I was no more troubled, at what they sayd, then if they had not sayd it; but the onlie feare I had, was, whether, or no, they would dissolue the House; for, this put me to a great deale of paine; and so also did it, to see, that the persons, who assisted me, lost credit, and were otherwise also put to much inconuenience by it. But as for that, which they sayd of me, I was rather glad of it, then otherwise. And if I had had anie Faith, it would haue made no alteration in me at all; but when there is a want in some one vertue, all the rest are wont to be cast into a kind of slumber. And so I was much troubled, during those two dayes,

dayes, wherein the two Assemblies, whereof I spake, were made amongst the people. And I being very much afflicted, our Lord said these words to me: *Dost thou not knovv, that I am povverfull? Of vvhat art thou afrayd?* And thus did he assure me, that the House should not be dissolued whereby I remained full of comfort.

But then, did they dispatch their Agents, or Sollicitours, to the Councell Royall, with their Informations; and so, there came order from thence, to send a Relation thither, of the whole proceeding. So that heer, we might behold the beginning of a great Suite in Law; for already, some were gone to the Court, on the part of the Cittie; & others were instantly to goe, on the part of the Monasterie; and, on the other side, neither had we anie monie, nor did I know, what to doe; but our Lord prouided all things, for vs. And as for me, my Father Prouinciall did neuer forbid me to deale in it; for he is so true a freind to all Vertue, that, although he did not assist in the worke, yet he would not be against it; though yet withall, it be very true, that he would neuer giue me leaue, to passe to this new Monasterie, till he might see, what kind of end the Busines would haue. In the meane time, the Seruants of God, were all alone, and did more, with their prayers, then all that, which I was able to doe, by way of negotiation; though yet still, it were necessarie, to vse diligence enough. Sometimes it would seem, that all was wanting; and especially

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one day, before the Prouinciall came hither, when the Prioreſſe commanded me, not to treat anie more, about that buſines, but to giue it vtterly ouer. But then went I to Almightie God, and ſayd: O my Lord; This Houſe is not mine, but it was made for thee; and now, there is no Creature, to negotiate the buſines for vs; and therefore, thy Diuine Maieſtie muſt be pleaſed to doe it. Heervpon, I found my ſelf really, and inſtantly, at ſo great eaſe, and ſo without anie manner of trouble, as if I had had the whole world, on my ſide, to employ it ſelf for me; and ſo I held all the buſines, to be in ſafetie. Vpon this, a certaine Prieſt, a very great Seruant of Almightie God, who had aſſiſted me alwaies, and was a great freind, and fauourer of all Perfection, went to the Court, to follow the buſines; and laboured in it very much; and ſo alſo, that holie Caualier, of whome I made mention before, did very much therein, and ſhewed it fauour, in all kinds. He endured alſo great troubles, and perſecutions for it, otherwiſe; and I found him euer, like a Father, to it; and ſo I doe alſo, to this day. And our Lord did ſtill inſpire them, who were our freinds, with ſuch a deale of feruour, that euerie one of them, tooke our buſines to hart, as much as if it had been properly, his owne; and as if his whole honour, and life, had been concerned in it; though yet, they had indeed, no other intereſt, then only, in regard, that they thought, it did import the Seruice of Almightie God.

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But now, it ſeemes clearly, that his Diuine Maieſtie, aſſiſted the good, and vertuous Prieſt, who was alſo a Doctour; and he indeed, was one of them, who helped vs moſt; for, the Biſhop employed him about it, in his name, in a certaine great *Giunta*, or publique Meeting, which was framed about it; and therein, he ſtood alone, for vs, againſt them all; and, in fine, he found meanes to appeaſe them. For, he made a kind of ouerture, by a certaine way, which was ſufficient to entertaine, and ſuſpend their proceeding; & indeed there was not anie one, who could otherwiſe haue ſufficed, to keepe them from reſoluing inſtantly, to employ euen their verie liues, for the ouerthrowing of the Buſines. This Seruant of God, of whome I ſpeake, was alſo the man, who gaue the Habit to the Religious, and ſet-vp the B. Sacrament there; and he was ſubiect to perſecution enough, for his labour.

This batterie continued about half a yeare and, to relate in particular manner, the great troubles, which paſſed in all that time, would be a long buſines. For my part, I wondred extreamly, at what a coyle the Diuel kept againſt a few poore Woemen; and how euerie bodie could vnderſtand, that, forſooth, twelue Religious and a Prioreſſe (for, they were no more) could be thought, to be of ſuch miſcheif, to a whole Cittie. I meane, ſuch miſcheif to them, who oppoſed it; but as for the Religious, they were, indeed, of ſo auſtere life, that, if anie hurt, or errour

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were to grow by that designe, it must be only to them. And as for being of preiudice to the place, it carried not so much, as anie apparance; and yet they could meet with enow, who would find meanes (and that, forsooth, with good conscience) to crosse it. But yet now at length, they came so farre, as to affirme, that (prouided alwaies, that they would get Reuenue, and liue vpon it) they were content to giue way, and that the Busines might goe on.

For my part, I was then so wearie, to see all them, who assisted vs, in so great trouble (which I regarded much more, then mine owne) that I grew to be of opinion, that it would not be very ill done, to accept their Licence, vnder the condition of hauing Reuenue, till the times might grow quieter by degrees; and that so, we might get to be without it, afterward. At other times, I, being very imperfect, and wicked, beganne to thinke, that perhaps our Lord would not mislike, that it should be so, since we could not obtaine our end, otherwise; and therefore, I was already growne, to consent to this Accord. But being in Prayer, the night before the finall conclusion thereof, when the Accord was euen already begunne, our Lord commanded me, that I should consent to no such thing, as they intended; and that, if we beganne to take Reuenue, they would neuer giue vs leaue to forgoe it; and diuerse other things, he also told me. The self same night, that holie Creature, *Fray Pedro de Alcantara*, appeared to me; for

then he was dead. And before alſo he dyed, he wrote to me; and taking notice of the great oppoſition, & perſecution, which was raiſed againſt vs, he ſayd, he was hartily glad, that this Foundation was made with ſo great contradiction, and how that, ſerued him for a ſigne, that our Lord would grow to be greatly ſerued in this Monaſterie, ſince the Diuel tooke ſuch paines, to hinder it. But yet, he perſwaded vs ſtill, that we ſhould, by no meanes, accept of liuing vpon Reuenue; yea and he preſſed this point, in two or three ſeuerall parts of the ſame Letter; and told me, that if we perſiſted therein, we ſhould grow to effect the Buſines, according to our owne deſire. I had already ſeen him, at two other ſeuerall times, after his death; and I beheld the much glorie, wherein he was; and he gaue me no apprehenſion of feare at all, but rather ioyed me much, for he neuer appeared to me, but in the qualitie of a Glorifyed Bodie; yea and full of exceſſiue glorie; and ſo accordingly, he gaue me great ioy to ſee him; ſaue, that he partly ſhewed himſelf with a kind of ſeueritie, or rigour, when he told me, that, in no caſe, I ſhould accept of Reuenue; and why would I not follow his counſaile? And ſo he inſtantly vaniſhed; and I remained amazed. I went therefore, the next day, to that Cauallier (he being the perſon, to whome we ſtill carried all the buſines, as to one, who aſſiſted vs moſt therein) and I told him, what had paſſed; and that he ſhould, by no meanes, agree, to take anie Re-

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uenue, but rather, to let the Suite goe on. Now, he was euen much more earneſtly of the ſame mind, then I was my ſelf; and was very glad, to find me of his; and afterward told me alſo, how vnwillingly he euer ſpoke, about making anie agreement, or compoſition.

But a certaine other perſon, beganne againe, ere long, to declare himſelf againſt vs; and truly, ſhe was a good Seruant of Almighty God; but yet ſhe wiſhed (though ſhe might haue good intentions therein) that ſince the buſines was in ſo good ſtate, they might doe well, to put it into the hands of Lawyers. Vpon this, I had a great deale of diſquiet; for, ſome of them, who aſſiſted me, grew alſo to be of that opinion; though yet, indeed, it were a verie trick of the Diuel; and perhaps, it was a morſell of the hardeſt diſgeſtion, of all the reſt. But our Lord aſſiſted me in all; for, that, is the ſumme of the buſines; and it is no eaſie thing, to giue all that, to be well vnderſtood, which paſſed, between the beginning, and finiſhing, of this Monaſterie; although this laſt half yeare, and the other, which was the firſt, were the moſt troubleſome parts of the whole time.

Yet now, the Cittie being growne, in ſome ſort, to be appeaſed, that Father of *S.Dominick's Order*, who was a Graduate in *Theologie*, layd ſo handſomly about him (though he were not preſent then) that he aſſiſted vs much. Our Lord brought him alſo afterward, in a certaine conjuncture of time, when he did vs a great deale of

good; and it seemed, that his Diuine Maiestie had induced him to that iourney, for that onlie purpose. For, himself told me afterwards, that he had no occasion at all, to come, but only, by haueing heard of this busines; and that he grew to know of it, meerly, by chance. He stayed heer, as long as was necessarie; and when he was returning home he procured, by certaine meanes, which he vsed that our Father Prouincial should giue leaue both that I, and some others also, might come to stay, at our new Monasterie; which yet seemed a kind of impossible thing, for him to grant, so soone; yea and that I might also doe the office of teaching, and instructing such, as were there already. But the day, when I got thither, was of extreame comfort to my hart. For, being in Prayer in the Church, before I entred into the Monasterie, and being in a kind of Rapt, I saw Christ our Lord appeare; and, me thought, he receaued me with great loue, and put a Crown vpon my head; & gaue me thākes for the Seruice which I had done to his Mother. At another time also, we being all, in the Quire, and in Prayer after *Compline*, I saw our B. Ladie, in excessiue glorie, with a white Mantle, vpon, and about her; and she seemed to shelter, and protect vs all, vnder that Mantle; and I vnderstood, how high a degree of glorie, our Blessed Lord would vouchsafe to the Religious of that House.

When we came once to celebrate the Office of the Church, the deuotion, which the people began

beganne to carrie towards vs, was very great; and already, there grew to come more Religious to vs; and our Lord beganne also, to incline euen them, to doe vs most fauour, and, most bountifully, to impart all things to vs, who had persecuted vs most. And they came to approue that, which they had misliked before; and so, by little and little, they let their Suite fall. And they sayd, that now they were come to vnderstand, that it was the worke of Almightie God, since his Diuine Maiestie had been pleased, that it should proceed, and prosper, in despight of so great contradiction. Yea now, there is not a Creature, who conceaues, that it had been well done, to desist from the Worke; and accordingly, they take much care, to prouide vs with Almes, euen without our desiring anie thing, at anie time, of anie bodie. So that, it seemes, our Blessed Lord stirres them vp, to send it to vs, of themselues; and so we passe without the want of anie thing, in the world, which is necessarie; and I hope in our Blessed Lord, that it shall, for euer, be so. For, being so few, as we are, if withall we shall doe our dutie, (as now his Diuine Maiestie giues vs grace to doe,) I make my self very sure, that we shall want nothing; and so, haue no occasion, to be troublesome, or importunate, towards anie Creature; but that, as I was saying, our Lord will take care of vs heerafter, as he hath been pleased to doe, hitherto. And * for me, it is an excessiue comfort, to see my self setled heer, with such Ser-

* *Note the description vvhich the Saynt makes heer of her Religious.*

uants of Almightie God, as are so totally vntyed, from all the persons, and things of this world. Their conuersation, and discourse, is only, how they may be able, to proceed best, and fastest, in the Seruice of his Diuine Maiestie. Solitude is the greatest Solace, they can enioy; and to thinke that they shall see anie Creature, but only such, as may assist them, towards the enkindling, and inflaming their harts, to the loue of their Spouse, is the greatest trouble they haue; yea though it should be, from the neerest kindred they know. And so, there comes no bodie hither, but such as loue to treat of that busines; for, neither would he content them; nor they, him. And their language being only to speake of our Blessed Lord as it is, they neither vnderstand, nor be vnderstood, vnlesse the same language be spoken.

** This Fast of the Order, is not so strict, and rigorous, as that of the Church; but is rather a forbearance of halfe the Meale, then a Fast.*

We keepe, and obserue the Rule of our Ladie of *Carmel*; and this, entirely, as it ought to be, without anie manner of relaxation; but iust as it was ordained, by *Albertus*, Patriarch of *Ierusalem*; and confirmed, by Pope *Innocentius the Fourth* in the Fifth yeare of his Pontificate; and in the yeare of our Lord God, 1248.

So as now, me thinkes, all the troubles, and vexations, which haue been endured, about this Busines, will fall out to haue been very well employed. And though the Rule be of some rigour (for, they neuer eate Flesh, without necessitie and they * Fast, eight moneths, in the yeare; and obserue such other things also, as may be seen in the

the Originall Rule) yet moſt of the particulars, ſeem to be of little difficultie, to the Religious; & they obſerue alſo other things, which haue ſeemed neceſſarie to vs, for the more exact performance of the ſayd Rule. And I hope in our Bleſſed Lord, that this, which is begunne, will proceed, and proſper, according to what his Diuine Maieſtie hath told me.

The other Houſe, which the *Beata*, of whome I ſpake before, procured to erect, is now already made, in *Alcalà*; and there wanted not alſo oppoſitions, and great afflictions, and troubles, to them, who laboured in it. I know, that all Religious Obſeruance, is performed there, according to the firſt Inſtitution of this our Rule; and I beſeech our Bleſſed Lord, that all may turne to his honour, and praiſe; and of the *Glorious Virgin Marie*, whoſe Habit we weare; Amen.

I well beleiue, that your Reuerence will haue been wearyed, with the long Relation, which I haue made you, of this Monaſterie; which yet, in ſome reſpect, will fall-out to haue been but very ſhort; conſidering the manie afflictions, which were endured; and the great wonders, which our Bleſſed Lord wrought therein; whereof there are manie witneſſes, who can auerre them, by Oath. And now I beſeech your Reuerence, for the loue of our Lord, that, howſoeuer you may teare what you will, of all the reſt that I haue written, your Reuerence will keepe ſafe, what I ſend you heer, concerning this Mo-

naſterie ; and that, when I ſhall be dead, you will deliuer it ouer, to the Religious heer. For, it will greatly ſerue to animate ſuch , as ſhall ſucceed in the Seruice of Almightie God; and to make them procure, not to let that fall to the ground, which is begunne ; and ſo, to be ſtill paſſing further, and further, on, when they ſhall ſee, how carefully his Diuine Maieſtie bleſſed it, in the erection thereof, by meanes of ſo wicked , and baſe a Creature; as my ſelf.

And ſince our Bleſſed Lord hath ſhewed, in ſo particular a manner, that he was reſolued to fauour, both the beginning, and finiſhing of this Monaſterie , it ſeemes to me , that they ſhall doe very ill , and that they will be ſeuerely puniſhed, by Almightie God, who ſhall endeauour, at all, to ſlacken the perfection of this Rule. For heer, our Bleſſed Lord hath already begunne , ſo to aſſiſt, and ſtrengthen vs , as that this kind of Croſſe , is carried with extraordinary ſuauity , and is very well diſcerned , to be tollerable enough ; and that , great preparation is alſo vſed, and prouiſion made , for euerie one of them , who ſhall deſire to enioy their Spouſe *Ieſus-Chriſt*, our Lord, hand to hand , by liuing chearfully, and euerlaſtingly, in the ſayd Rule. For , this is that verie thing, which they are alwaies to reſolue. They alone, with him alone; and they are to be no more, then thirteen ; for I ſee , by the opinion of manie, that this is fitt ; and I haue found it alſo to be true, by experience , That to preſerue that Spirit , which they

they haue, and to liue of Almes, * without asking anie thing of anie Creature, there will not be meanes for more. And euer, let them be beleiued best, who, with manie troubles of their owne, and by meanes of the manie prayers of others, procured, that that might be done, which was best. And so also, by the consideration of the great contentment, and ioy, and the very little care, and trouble, which we see euerie bodie to haue in this House; as also by the much better health, which now they haue, then formerly they were wont to enioy, it may be held, and hoped, that this course will fall-out to be most conueniēt. And, whosoeuer shall still conceaue, that the way of life heer, is too seuere, and sharpe, let him rather apply the fault, to his owne want of Spirit, then cast it vpon that Discipline, which is obserued heer; since persons, who are of delicate constitution, and haue no health, of which to brag, doe yet so easily obserue this Rule, because they haue Spirit. And let those others goe, in God's name, to some other Monasterie, where they also may be saued, according to the Spirit, which they shall haue.

* *This Point of haueing so very few, in a Monastery, was partly meant, for them who were to liue in any place, on Almes; and partly because the Saint had seen some disorders by haueing too many Religious in other Houses; and yet the Saint her selfe came afterward, to admit of twenty, in stead of twelue; and would perhaps haue admitted more, if she had found reason for it.*

THE SEAVEN AND THIRTIETH CHAPTER.

She treates of the Effects, vvhich vſed to remaine in her Soule, vvhen our Lord had done her anie Fauour; and she accompanies this Diſcourſe, vvith very profitable Doctrine. She declares alſo, hovv vve are to procure, and greatly eſteem the gaining of one degree of glorie more; and hovv vve muſt not, for anie trouble, or paines, forſake thoſe benefits, and bleſſings, vvhich are euerlaſting.

I Am loath to recount anie more of thoſe Fauours, which our Lord hath done me, then ſuch, as I haue related already, yea and euen they, are more, I doubt, then need to be thought, to haue been ſhewed, to ſo miſerable a Creature, as my ſelf; but yet, to obey our Lord, who hath commanded it, and your Reuerence alſo, who expect it, I will declare ſome things heer, to his glorie. And I humbly beſeech his Diuine Maieſtie, that it may ſerue for the profit of ſome Soule, to ſee, that our Bleſſed Lord would vouchſafe, ſo highly to fauour ſo wretched a thing, as I am; for then, what will he not doe for ſuch others, as ſhall procure to ſerue his Diuine Maieſtie, in good earneſt?

earneſt? And euerie bodie will ſo be encouraged heerby, to giue our Lord contentment, and guſt; ſince, euen in this mortall life of ours, he vouchſafes to impart to vs, ſuch aſſurances, and euen pawnes of his loue.

But firſt, it is heer to be vnderſtood, that in all theſe Fauours, which Almightie God is pleaſed to doe to a Soule, there is euer, more glorie, or leſſe; as he himſelf is pleaſed to impart it, more, or leſſe. For, the glorie, and guſt, and comfort, which he imparts, is ſo much more, in ſome Viſions, then in other, as that I was euen amazed, to find ſo great difference of enioying, euen in this life. For it happens, that there is ſo great an excellencie, belonging to ſome one Regalo, or guſt, which our Lord imparts, in ſome one Viſion, or in ſome one Rapt, that it ſeemes an impoſſible thing, to be able ſo much as to deſire anie thing, beyond it, in this life; nor doth the Soule, indeed, deſire more; nor would euen wiſh, for more ioy, and guſt; though yet, ſince our Bleſſed Lord hath been pleaſed, to giue me to vnderſtand, how great the difference is, in Heauen, between the glory, which is enioyed by ſome, & that, which is enioyed by others, I am come to ſee very clearly, that euen heer alſo, there are no ſet limits in giuing, when our Lord pleaſes. And ſo could I alſo wiſh, that there were no limits ſet, in my doing Seruice to his Diuine Maieſtie, but that I would employ my whole ſtrength, and health, and life, vpon it; that ſo, I might not looſe the leaſt ima-

imaginable proportion, of my enioying anie Celestiall blessing, through anie fault of mine. And heerin I declare my self, thus farre, That, if this choice should be offered me, Whether I would be subiect to all afflictions of the world, euen till the end of the same world, and then ascend, by that meanes, to the enioying of neuer so little more glorie; or els, without anie affliction at all, to enioy a little lesse glorie; I would most willingly accept of all those troubles, and afflictions, for a little more enioying; that so I might also vnderstand more, of the greatnes of Almightie God; because I see, that he, who vnderstands more of him, doth both praise him, and loue him, so much the more. I say not, but that I should be fully contented, and should esteem my self, very happie, to be in Heauen, though it were but in the most inferiour place thereof; for our Blessed Lord would shew an abundance of mercie thereby, to such an one, as had been designed to Hell-Fire, as I was; and I humbly pray his Diuine Maiestie, that he will not cast his eye vpon my great Sinnes, but that, in fine, I may goe to Heauen. But that, which I say, is this, That, if our Lord would giue me grace, to labour much for him, and if I were able, to doe it, I would not, vpon anie tearmes (how much paine soeuer, it might cost me) forgoe the gaine of anie thing, in the way of Celestiall glorie, by my fault, (miserable Creature, that I am) who had once lost it all, through mine owne great Sinnes.

But

But heer it is also to be noted, that, in euerie Fauour, or Vision, or Reuelation, which our Lord allowed me, my Soule did still remaine, with some great aduantage, or gaine; and sometimes, with a gaine, which was very extraordinarily great, by meanes of some of my Visions. For, by my seing Christ our Lord, his admirable, and excessiue beautie, remained imprinted in me; and I haue it, euen to this day; for, in such a case, as this, one onlie time serues the turne; and therefore, how much more, when it happens so very often, as our Lord hath vouchsafed to impart it to me. In particular, I remained with one, which was extreamly considerable; and it was this. I was subiect to a very great fault, by which, much hurt came vpon me, whensoeuer I beganne to obserue, that anie one had a good inclination to me. For if I liked him well, I grew to carrie so much affection to him, as that my memorie, would bind me, after a sort, to be still thinking of him, though yet, it were not, at all, with anie intention to offend Almightie God; and I would also be very glad to see him, and to thinke of him, and to consider the good parts, which I found in him; and this, was so preiudiciall a thing, that it did my Soule a great deale of hurt. But when once, I was come to behold the great Beautie of our Blessed Lord, I saw no Creature after that, which might seeme passable, in comparison of him; nor, who was able to take-vp my thought, for one minute. For, by casting the eye of my con-

consideration, vpon that Image, or Picture of him, which is engrauen in my Soule, I haue remained with so much Libertie of Minde, in this respect, that, euerie thing, which I haue seen, since that time, makes me readie, almost, to cast the gorge, in comparison of the excellencies, and ayre and grace, which I discerned to abound in this Lord of mine. Nor is there anie knowledge, or comfort, which I can, at all, esteem, in comparison of that, which growes by the hearing of one single word, which proceeds out of that Diuine mouth of his; and much more, when I haue heard so manie, and so often, from him. Nay, hold it to be a kind of impossible thing (vnless our Lord should permit it, in respect of my Sinnes) that euer I can loose the memorie of this blessing; or that anie Creature can euer so possesse me, as that I shall not instantly be free, by recouering the remembrance of this Lord.

It hapned to me sometimes, with some Ghostli Fathers of mine, (for I alwaies loue them much who gouerne my Soule, in regard, that I take ther truly, as in the place of Almightie God himsel and me thinkes, it is euer there, where I emplo my affection, most) that esteeming my self to be i securitie with them, I would be apt to shew ther extraordinary ciuilityes; whereas they, on th other side, (as being great Seruants of Almighti God) would be, not only carefull, but feareful least I should fasten, or tye my self, too much, t them, though it should be, in a most innocer manne

manner; and they would ſhew themſelues, euen to be diſpleaſed at it. Now, this grew in me, after I had made my ſelf ſubiect, to be be directed, and euen commanded, by them; for before, I did not beare them ſo much loue. But the while, I confeſſe, I would be laughing ſometimes, within my ſelf, to conſider, how extreamly they were deceaued; though yet, I would not alwaies be telling them, ſo clearly, how little I vſed to tye myſelf to anie Creature, as I was ſure of it, in myſelf. But yet, I gaue them certaintie enough of it; and when once they were growne to be more inward, and more confident with me, they came to know, how particularly I was obliged to our Bleſſed Lord, in that kind. But theſe ſuſpitions, which they had of me, were neuer wont to occurr, but in the beginnings.

Beſides, there grew to be, both more loue, and more confidence, between this Lord of mine, and me, after I had ſeen him; as one, with whome I was come, to haue a kind of continuall conuerſation. I ſaw, that though he were God, he was alſo Man; and that he did not wonder, at our weaknes; for, he well knowes our miſerable condition, and compoſition, which is ſubiect to take Falls of ſo manie kindes, by that firſt Sinne of *Adam*, which he, was come to repaire, Nay I ſee, that, although he be my Lord, I may yet treat with him, as with a Freind; becauſe he is not ſuch a kind of Lord, as we are wont to meet with, in this world, who pinne all the Lordlyneſ-

ſes,

ſes, which they haue, vpon a certaine kind of changeable, and remoueable demonſtrations; and who muſt giue, but particular, and ſet dayes, for Audience; and ſo, the perſons, whome they will heare, muſt be appointed, and named. And if perhaps anie poore Creature haue a buſines, there muſt be vſe of labour, and fauour, and a walking in By-Wayes, before it can be euer negotiated or concluded. And if perhaps they haue anie thing to doe with the King himſelf, alas poore folkes; for they, who touch not vpon the Caualier, or great man, muſt not ſo much as preſume to approach, but be content to aske, who the Fauorites are. And now, they will certainly, not faile out to be ſuch, as vſe to tread the world vnder their feet; becauſe ſuch perſons as theſe, are wont to ſpeake reall truths; for, they neither feare anie thing, nor owe anie thing; nor, in fine, are anie part of the Pallace. For there, theſe things are not vſed; but to diſſemble, whatſoeuer they diſlike; nay, they ſcarce dare ſo much as thinke, for fear leaſt they ſhould grow by it, into leſſe fauour.

O King of Glorie, and Lord of all the Kings of this world! how true is it, that thy Kingdome is not guarded by Sticks, and ſtrawes, ſince, in it ſelf, it hath no end? How true is it, that there is no need of third perſons, to introduce vs, to Audience with thee? For, by our verie ſeing thy ſelf, we inſtantly ſee withall, that thou, only, do indeed deſerue, to be called Lord; So great is thy Maieſtie, which thou ſheweſt. Nor is there her

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anie need at all, of Assembles, and Guards, in Court, whereby thou maist be knowne to be King. Whereas, if anie Earthlie King were left alone, he would hardly be knowne to be King; and how much soeuer himself might desire it, yet the people would haue difficultie to beleiue it. For, in himself, he is no more, then others are; and therefore, we must either see him so adorned, and attended, first, or els, we shall hardly beleiue afterward, that he is the King. And he hath therefore, so much more reason, to serue himself of these externall aduantages, and helps; for els, they would not hold him in account; becausse his seeming to be so powerfull, depends not vpon the inward, and innate dignitie of his Person; but his State is deriued to him, from others. But, O, thou, my Lord, and my King, that I were able now, to represent that Maiestie, which thou hast? For, it is impossible to forbeare to see, that thou art the great Emperour of the whole world; in thy self; and that thy Maiestie doth euen astonish the beholders. But yet, it puts me to more amazement, O my Lord, to see, in companie thereof, the great humilitie, and loue, which thou beareſt to such a wretched Creature, as my self. For, we may euer speake, and treat with thee, about all things, euen as we will our selues, when once we shall haue lost that first amazement, and feare, to see the Maiestie of thy Presence; though yet then, we shall haue more feare to offend thee, then to see thee; yea and yet, euen that, not so much for

being, O Lord, afrayd of thy punishment, (for we doe not esteem that, at all) as in respect of th miserie, which it is, to loose thy verie self.

Behold heer, the benefits of this Vision; beside manie other great ones, which it leaues in th Soule. And if it be of Almightie God, it makes i self be vnderstood, by the effects, whensoeuer th Soule hath Light; for, manie times, as I haue sayd our Lord is pleased, that it should remaine i darknes, and not see this Light; and therefore, i is not so strange a busines, which so wicked Creature as my self, may come to see.

On the other side, it is but euen now, that i hath hapned to me, to be eight dayes, in such case, as that I seemed, neither to haue knowledg of what I owe to Almightie God, nor yet, ani memorie of his Fauours; but only, that my Soul was euen halfe besotted, and estranged, and em ployed vpon I know not what, nor how. No yet, vpon anie ill thoughts; but I was so very vn toward, in respect of good ones, that I did euen as it were, laugh at my self; and tooke a kind o gust, to see the great basenes of a Soule, when soeuer our Lord vouchsafes not to be working in it. But she yet vnderstands very well, that she is not without possessing him, euen in this State for it is not (as I haue formerly sayd) as it vses t be, in our great afflictions; but, though we bring wood thither, and doe also, all that verie little which we are able to doe on our part, there i yet, no such thing, in the world, as the kindling

at that time; of anie fire, of the loue of our Lord, in our harts. And it is no small mercie of his; that we can so much as find, that there is anie smoake; for, at least, we know thereby, that shie is not dead; and our Lord returnes to kindle it againe, afterward. But then, this Soule of ours (though we breake our verie heads in blowing, and weatie our selues also otherwise, in ordering, and composing the wood) seemes to be in such a condition, as that euerie thing serues, to choake vs, the more. And so, I thinke, the best of our case to be then, to render our selues wholy vp; and to know, that we are able to doe nothing of our selues; and then to apply our endeauours, to the doing of some externall, meritorious things. Yea and perhaps our Blessed Lord is pleased, to take Prayer from vs, at that time; to the end, that the Soule may exercise her self in those other actions, and so vnderstand, at length, by good experience, how little she was able to doe, of her self.

But now I haue, this verie day, regaled my Soule, with our Lord; and presumed to complaine to his Diuine Maiestie, euen against himself, to this effect: How comes it to passe, O my God, that it seemes not enough for thee, to keep me in this miserable life; and that I resolue, to endure it all, for thy sake; and that I content my self to be, where all is vexation, and trouble; and that I may not so much as enioy, euen thee; but that I must also eat, and sleepe, and dispatch businesse, and treat with euerie Creature, according to the occasion,

casion, and that I suffer all this, for the loue o
thee? And now, O my Lord, thou knowest, tha
this is an extreame torment, to my hart; and tha
yet, in those few little moments of time, whic
remaine to me, for the enioying thee, thou ye
art pleased to hide thy self, after this manner, fron
me. And how can this be compatible with th
mercie? and how can the loue, thou beareſt me
permit it? I beleiue, O my deare Lord, that, if i
were a possible thing for me, to hide my self fron
thee, as thou dost thy self from me, I thinke,
say, and I beleiue so much, of the loue thou bear
est me, as that thou wouldst not endure it at m
hands. But thou art still with me; and euer see
in what case I am. Yet permit not longer, O m
Lord, that this kind of course be held, but
humbly beseech thee to consider, that it is a kin
of wrong, to proceed after this manner, with on
who loues thee so much. This, and the like, hat
occurred to me, to say; though yet I considere
first, how that place, which had been prouide
for me, in Hell, was appointed me, after a kin
of fauourable way, in comparison of what I ha
deserued. But yet sometimes, the loue I beare t
our Blessed Lord, is so very extrauagant, that
scarce can tell, what I doe; and then, with all th
little vnderstanding I haue, I make such cõplaints
as these; and our Lord endures them all, at m
hands; and therefore, let so good a King, as this
be euer praised. But now, might we, perhaps, b
able, to approach anie King of this world, wit
such

such audacities, as these?

And yet I wonder not much, that we may not presume, to talke, after this manner, to our Earthly Kings, whome we haue so much reason to feare; yea or euen to such great Lords, as are the superiour parts of the State. For, * now we find the world so changed, that our verie liues should be longer, then now they are; to the end, that we might haue time enough, to learne the Punto's, and new customes, and fashions, of good Manners of the world, if there be anie meaning withall, that we should also, haue anie time to spend, in the Seruice of Almightie God. For my part, I euen blesse my self, to see what happens; for, the truth is, that euen already, I scarce knew, how to liue in the world, when I came to this place. For, now it passes, I can assure you, for no least, whensoeuer there is any little omission; to treat men, euen with much more Stile, and ceremonie, then they deserue; but they doe really so take it, for an affront, that you must, forsooth, interpret your intention, and professe your desire, to make satisfaction, if there be (as I was saying) anie omission; yea and I pray God, that they will vouchsafe to beleiue you. But, in the meane time, I returne to affirme, that really, I did not know how to liue; so miserably doe these things afflict a poore ouer-laboured Soule. For she sees, that, on the one side, they command her to employ her whole thought, vpon God; and that it is necessarie for her, to doe so; to the end, that she may be deliuered from

* *She inueighs vvith much reason, against vaine Complements, and especially amongst Religious people.*

manie dangers; and, on the other side, she also finds, that it concernes her, not to loose a *Punto*, euen in the *Puntilio's* of this world, vpon the price of not chanceing to minister occasion, of giuing temptation, and trouble, to them, who place their Honour, in these *Punto's*. For, as for me, they tired me, euen outright; and I could neuer be at an end, of making satisfactions; for, it was neuer in my power (how much soeuer I endeauoured it) to forbeare the making manie faults in this kind; which, as I sayd, are not held, to be little, in the account of the world. And it is true that, in Religious Orders, (which, in all reason should be excused, and discharged, in such kinds as these) there is really a very true discharge. Not yet that they affirme, that our Monasteries ought to be a kind of Court, for good breeding, and to know, what belongs to good Manners, (for I confesse, I vnderstand not this kind of language) but because I haue been thinking, that our Saint had antiently affirmed, and taught, that a Monasterie should be a kind of Court, to instruct such persons, as had a minde, to make themselues Courtiers, in the Kingdome of Heauen. But now things are vnderstood in the direct contrarie way; because they, who should be continually employed, in pleasing Almightie God, and in procuring to abhorre the world, must now, forsooth, be obliged to all attention, and care (in stead of pleasing God) to please such, as liue in the world; yea and that, in certaine things, which are euery

day

day so subiect to change, that I know not, how our performances could passe vn-reproued; yea though it were possible, that all might be learned, in one Lesson, without anie losse at all, of more time.

Yea, and euen for the Titles, which are expected, vpon the Superscription of Letters, it were now, it seemes, not to be vnfitt, that there were some Doctours-Chaire erected (as one may say) where they might instruct, and teach, how such, and such Titles, were to be vsed. For sometimes, men leaue the Paper emptie, on one side of the page of the Letter, and sometimes on the other. And now he, who was not wont, to be *VVorshipfull*, must be called *Honourable*; and I know not, in fine, where things will rest. For, I am not yet fiftie yeares old, and yet I haue seen such changes in my time, that I cannot tell now, how to liue. But then, how will they, who are now borne, know, how to carrie themselues, if they chance to liue long?

I haue really great compassion of Spirituall persons, who are obliged to liue in the world, for certaine holie ends; for, I hold it to be a kind of terrible Crosse, which they are faine to carrie, euen in this respect. If they could all come to agree in a tale, and professe themselues to be ignorant, and be content to be held for such, in this kind of art, or science, they might free themselues, from a great deale of trouble.

But now, into what kind of fooleries, haue I

caſt my ſelf? For, by treating of the greatneſſes of Almightie God, I am growne, by degrees, to ſpeake of the baſeneſſes of the world. And ſince our Lord hath done me the Fauour, to make me able to leaue it, I am reſolued to goe out of it, now at length. Let them fitt themſelues to it, as they liſt, who ſuſtaine, and hold-vp theſe toyes, with ſo much trouble to themſelues; and I pray God, that we may not pay dearly for them, in the other world, where there is no change to be found, Amen.

THE EIGHT AND THIRTIETH CHAPTER.

Wherein she treats of ſome great Fauours vvhich our Lord vvas pleaſed to doe her, as vvell, in acquainting her vvith certaine Secrets of Heauen, as by giuing her other great Viſions, and Reuelations. She declares alſo the effects, vvhich they left in her Soule; and the great benefits vvhich she obtained by them.

BEing ſo very ill at eaſe, one night, that I thought fitt to excuſe my ſelf from Prayer, tooke a Paire of Beades, or Roſarie, into my hand, to employ my ſelf Vocally, by that meanes. And I procured not to recollect my Vnderſtanding, in anie very ſerious manner; though yet, for-

as-

asmuch as concerned my exteriour, I was sufficiently recollected, and in my Oratorie. But when our Blessed Lord hath a minde to anie thing, these diligences of ours, to the contrarie, are not wont to serue to anie great purpose. For, I remaining a while, after this manner, there came a Rapt of Spirit vpon me, with such an excessiue impulse, or impetuositie, that there was no power in me, to resist it. It seemed to me, that I was carried vp, and placed in Heauen; yea, and the first persons, whome I saw there, were my Father, and my Mother; and I also saw some things besides, so very great, and all, in so very short a space of time, as wherein an *Aue Maria* might be sayd, that I was amazed; as conceauing, that it was too very great a Fauour for me. In this circumstance, of the times haueing been so short, I may perhaps be deceaued; for it may haue been a little longer; but at least, it ranne speedily away, and seemed short enough. For my part, I was in some feare of an Illusion; but yet, supposing that it should proue none, I found my self in an extreame deale of shame, with considering, how I could euer be able to declare anie such thing, as that, to my Ghostlie Father. Not yet, in my opinion, that I was to receaue trouble by it, in respect of anie such thing, as Humilitie, in me, but because I thought it likelie enough, that he would make some ieast at it, and say: Lord, what a kind of *S. Paul*, or *S. Ierome*, is this woeman growne, that she, forsooth, must see things of Heauen! yea and

beſides, in regard, that theſe Glorious Saints, had participated, and been admitted to ſuch things, as theſe, I grew to be in ſo much the more feare of my ſelf; and really, I did nothing but weepe bitterly, in regard, that, in my opinion, there was no apparance of reaſon at all, that theſe things were to paſſe, after this manner.

But yet howſoeuer, in fine I reſolued, that I would goe to my Ghoſtlie Father, notwithſtanding all the auerſion, which I had; and that I would acquaint him with all things; for I neuer durſt conceale anie thing, from him, through the very great feare, wherein I was, of being abuſed, and deceiued. Yet when he found me to be ſo greatly afflicted, he did procure to comfort me much; and told me of manie good things, to free me from the paine, wherein I was.

But afterward, that which followes, hapned to me; and the ſame occurrs to me often. For, our Lord went ſhewing me yet, greater Secrets; I ſay, he went ſhewing them to me; for, that a Soule ſhould euer be able to ſee anie one iott more, then is repreſented to her by our Lord, is abſolutly an impoſſible thing; and for my part, I neuer ſaw more, then meerly, what he was pleaſed to ſhew me, at euerie ſeuerall time. But that, was ſo very much, that the leaſt part thereof, ſufficed, to make me remaine all amazed, and my Soule to be very much improued, towards the vndervalue, and diſ-eſteem of whatſoeuer thing might be in this world.

I would be extreamly glad, if I could tell, how to giue ſome little part of the leaſt of that, which I knew, to be vnderſtood; but I find, that it is wholy impoſſible. For, though this Light, which we ſee heer, and that Light, which is repreſented there, be, all of it, Light: yet ſtill, there is ſo great a difference withall, as that there is no manner of compariſon. For, the claritie, and brightnes, euen of the verie Sunne it ſelf, is a thing of meane, and poore apparance, in reſpect of this. In fine, the verie Imagination of man, how ſubtile, and refined ſoeuer it may be, is yet vnable to reach to the deſcribing anie thing of this Light; nor yet of anie other thing at all, which our Lord was pleaſed to giue me to vnderſtand; and that with ſuch a ſoueraigne kind of delight, as cannot poſſibly be declared. For, all our Senſes enioy ſuch a ſuperiour degree of ſweetnes, that it can no way be fully expreſſed; and therefore I thinke it will be beſt, to ſay no more.

I had once been aboue an hower, in this condition, when our Lord ſhewed me admirable things; and ſeeming not to depart, from being neer me, he ſpake theſe verie words to me: *See heer, my Daughter, vvhat they looſe, vvho are againſt me; & doe not thou forbeare, to let them knovv it.* But, O my deare Lord; what good will my ſaying it, doe to them, whome their owne actions blind ſo deeply, if thy Diuine Maieſtie doe not giue them light? Some there be, to whome thou haſt giuen it; and they haue profited much, by knowing

ing thoſe greatneſſes of thine; but yet, O my Lord, they ſee, in ſuch ſort, withall, that they are ſhewed to ſuch a wretched, and miſerable thing, as my ſelf, that I cannot but eſteem it a ſtrange thing, to find, that anie Creature ſhould beleiue me. Bleſſed be thy name, and thy mercie; for, at leaſt, I haue plainly ſeen an euident amendment, in mine owne Soule; and I would be glad, if I might ſtill remaine there, and not come back to liue heer, anie more. For, the contempt, wherein I held this whole world, was very great; and it ſeemed to be no better, then euen dung, to me; and now I find, how baſely we be employed, who are detained therein.

Whilſt I remained with that Ladie, of whome I ſpoke before, it hapned to me once, when I was ill, and euen ſick at the hart, (for I haue formerly been ſubiect to this miſerie, though nothing ſo much of late) ſhe conſidering me with much charitie, and compaſſion, commanded, that one day, certaine Iewells of hers, ſhould be brought forth, which ſhe had, of very great value; and one, in particular, of Diamonds, which was prized at a verie high rate. Now she conceaued, belike, that this would recreate, and reviue me; but I ſmiled inwardly at her, the while; and had compaſſion to ſee, how meane things men eſteem, when I conſidered, what our Lord hath layd-vp for vs; And I thought, how impoſſible a thing it would be, for me, to put anie manner of value, vpon ſuch toyes, as thoſe, euen though I

should

should endeauour it, vnleſſe our Lord ſhould firſt depriue me of the memorie of thoſe other treaſures.

But now, this kind of Fauour, giues ſo great a dominion to the Soule, that I know not, whether it can poſſibly be vnderſtood, but only by ſuch perſons, as poſſeſſe it. For it is the proper, true, and naturall diſcharge, and vntying of the Soule, from all things created; and this growes abſolutly, without anie labour of our owne; and Almightie God doth it all; and then, his Diuine Maieſtie ſhewes theſe Truths; and that ſo, as to make them remaine imprinted, and engrauen, in the Soule; and they ſerue alſo, to make vs ſee clearly, that it was not poſſible for vs, to acquire them, eſpecially in ſo ſhort a time, by anie diligences of our owne.

Vpon this, I alſo came, to haue very little feare of death, which formerly, had been great in me; but now it is growne, to ſeem to be a thing of very much facilitie, and eaſe, for ſuch as apply themſelues to the Seruice of Almightie God. For, by death, the Soule flyes out of priſon, in one moment; and is not only put preſently into libertie, but enioyes an euerlaſting reſt, and glory.

Now, this way, which is held by Almightie God, in carrying the Spirit vp, to ſhew her ſo excellent things, in theſe Rapts, ſeemes to beare a very cloſe kind of conformitie, with the paſſage of a Soule, out of a Bodie, at the hower of death; ſince it growes, euen at one inſtant, to be ſo entirely

tirely in possession of this Eternall Good. But heer, I lay aside, the consideration of those sorrowes, and paines, which are felt, when the Soule is torne out of the Bodie; for, we are to make little account of that, and they also, who loue God, in good earnest, and haue shaken hands with all the contentments of this life, are certainly wont to dye, with more sweetnes.

It also seemes to me, that these Fauours did me very much good, towards the bringing me into a knowledge of our true Countrie; and to see, that we were meer Pilgrims heer; and it is a pretious kind of thing, to find what passes there aboue, and to vnderstand, where, in fine, we are to liue for euer. And whensoeuer one goes to settle, and stay, for good and all, in anie Countrie, it giues a great assistance, towards the enduring all the incommodities of the iourney, when we know that the end of it, is to be such, as that we may, in fine, be in great repose, and happines, when we get thither. It is also heer obtained, that, with ease, we may grow able to consider Heauenlie things, that so our conuersation may be there. And this is a great kind of gaine, since the onlie thinking of Heauen, recollects the Soule; in regard that our Lord being pleased to shew vs somewhat, which passes there, we are induced to pawse, and thinke vpon it. And sometimes it so falls out, that they, whome I know to liue there, are the Soules, who accompanie me, and in whome I receaue most comfort; and these indeed

are

are they, who seem to be truely aliue; and those others, on the other side, who liue heer, seem to be so very deadly dead, as that this whole world, put togeather, cannot amount to be anie companie at all, for me. And especially, when I find anie of these impulses, or impetuosities, in my self, the whole world seemes to be, but a verie Dreame; and all the obiects, of these corporeall eyes of mine, a meer ieast, and toy; but that, which already I haue seen, with the eyes of my Soule, that, I say, is the thing, which she desires; and because she finds her self, to be yet farre off from thence, this is that, which is no lesse, then euen death it self, to my Soule.

In fine, the Fauour is excessiuely great, which our Lord vouchsafes to that Soule, to whome he giues such Visions, as these; for, they helpe her much, in all things, and particularly, to the carrying of a certaine heauie Crosse, which lyes vpon her. For, nothing can satisfye her now; but euerie thing disgusts, and checks her. And if our Blessed Lord did not giue way, that we might forget it sometimes, (though yet we remember it againe afterward) I know not how we should be able to liue. Let him be Blessed, and praised for all Eternitie; and I humbly begg of his Diuine Maiestie, euen by that very pretious Bloud, which his owne Sonne shed for me, that, since he hath vouchsafed, that I should vnderstand somewhat of these benefits, and blessings, and that I should beginne to enioy them also, in some kind, euen

in this life, it may not happen to me, as it did to *Lucifer*, who loſt all, by his owne fault. Doe not permit this, O my Lord, I humbly pray thee, euen by all that, which thou art; for, it is no ſmall feare, which I haue ſometimes; though yet at other times, yea and vſually, the mercie of Almightie God, giues me a very confident hope, that, ſince he hath been pleaſed, to draw me out of ſo manie Sinnes, he will not forſake me ſo now, as to let me be loſt. And this doe I humbly pray your Reuerence, that you will euer deſire, in my behalfe. But, in the meane time, me thinkes, that thoſe precedent Fauours, were not ſo very great, as this, which I will now apply my ſelf to relate; and that for manie reaſons, & manie bleſſings alſo; and, in particular, for that great courage, & ſtrēgth, which haue ſtill remained in me, vpon that account. And therefore, if thoſe former may be conſidered euerie one by it ſelf, this other, which I am going to relate, will be found to be ſo very great, as that there will be no compariſon at all, between them.

I was one day, and the ſame fell out to be vpon the Vigil of *Pentecoſt*, or *VVhitſontide*, after Maſſe, and I went to a more remote place, where I often vſed to pray; and I beganne to read in a certain Booke of this Feaſt, which had been written by a *Carthuſian*. And meeting there, with thoſe ſignes which both Beginners, and Proficients, and Perfect Soules, vſe to haue; and how they may come to vnderſtand, whether the Holie-Ghoſt doe inhabit their harts, or no; as ſoone as I had read theſe

theſe three States, it ſeemed to me, that Almightie God, through his goodnes, did not leaue, or faile, to be preſent with me, after a particular manner, forasmuch as I might be able to vnderſtand. And whilſt I was praiſing his Diuine Maieſtie, for that bleſſing, I remembred, that I had read the ſame thing formerly, when I wanted very much of that condition of minde; and then I ſaw, that I wanted it, as plainly, as now I vnderſtand the direct contrarie, concerning my ſelf. But thus I came to know the great Fauour, which our Bleſſed Lord had done me; and from thence, I grew alſo to conſider the Place, which my Soule had deſerued, in Hell, for my Sinnes; and I gaue great praiſe to Almightie God, in regard that now, me thought, my Soule was ſo extreamly changed, that I could hardly almoſt conceaue it, to be the verie ſelf-ſame thing, which it had been before.

Being then, in this conſideration, there came a great impulſe, or impetuoſitie vpon me, without my being able, to vnderſtand the occaſion thereof. Me thought my verie Soule had a minde, to get inſtantly, out of my Bodie; for now ſhe could not poſſibly containe her ſelf any longer; nor found ſhe her ſelf, at that time, to be able to ſtay anie longer heer, in the painefull expectation of ſo great a Good. Now, this was ſo exceſſiue an impulſe, or impetuoſitie, that I could not poſſibly tell, euen what to doe, with my ſelf; nor ſo much, as what I ayled; ſo extreamly was I growne, to be

in disorder. And though I were sitting then, yet was I not able, euen to sitt; and so I applyed my self a little, to leane; for I found, that all my naturall forces, began to faile me. But perceauing my self to be in this case, I saw a Doue, vpon mine owne head; but such a Doue, as was very different from them of this world; for she had not of our kind of feathers; but the wings were, as of certaine little shells, which darted a huge splendour from themselues. This Doue was much greater, then any ordinarie Doue; and me thought, I heard a noise, which she made with her wings; for, she was fluttering, about the space of an *Aue Maria*. But my Soule was already, in such condition, that growing to loose her self, she also lost the sight of the Doue. My Spirit did then beginne to quiet it self, vpon the entertaining of such a Guest, as she had gotten; though yet, for my part, I imagined, that so wondrous an encounter, and accident, as that was, might well haue disquieted, and frighted it. But she beginning already to enioy, layd quickly all feare aside; and, togeather with the self same ioy, grew to haue quietnes withall, but yet still, remaining in the Rapt. Now the glorie of this Rapt, was extreamly great; and I remained, during the most part of the whole Festiuitie of Pentecost, so stunned, and euer, as it were, besotted, and befooled, that I knew not what to doe with my self; nor was I able, by anie meanes, to vnderstand, how so high, and great a Fauour, as this was, could possibly find a resting

place,

place, in me. I neither heard, nor saw, in effect; by reason of the great excesse of my interiour ioy. I vnderstood, how, from that day forward, my Soule remained with a very great encrease of improuement, by enioying a more sublime loue of Almightie God; and that my vertues also, had gained a great encrease of strength. Now, let him be blessed, and praised, for all eternities, Amen.

I saw also, at another time, the same Doue, vpon the head of a certaine Father, of *S. Dominick's Order*; saue that, me thought, both the beames, and the brightnes of the verie wings, did spread, and extend themselues, much further; and it was giuen me then, to vnderstand, that he was to winne Soules to God.

Another time, I saw our Blessed Ladie, putting a white long Garment, vpon the back of a certaine *Graduate*, of the same Order; of whome I haue spoken formerly, diuerse times; and she told me, that she had giuen him that Mantle, for hauing assisted in the Busines of this House; and that his Soule should be defended, and preserued, for the future, in such puritie, as that he should not fall into Mortall Sinne. And I assure my self, it proued so; for he dyed, within few yeares, after; yea and he did both liue, and dye, with so great Pennance, and sanctitie, that there can be no doubt thereof, for anie thing, that we are able to vnderstand. And a certaine Religious man, who had been at his death, told me, that *S. Thomas of Aquin*, had been with him; and that he dyed,

both with great ioy, and with desire also, to be deliuered from this bannishment, wherein he was. Since that time he hath appeared to me, in very much glorie; and told me, diuerse things. He was a man of so great Prayer, that when a little before he dyed, he would gladly haue forborne the exercise thereof, through his great weaknes, he was not able to doe it; for euen then, he had manie Rapts. He wrote to me, a little before he dyed, about what course I thought he were best to take, for helpe, because euer, as soone as he had done Masse, he vsed to fall into Rapts, which would last long, without his being able to forbeare them. But our Lord gaue him, at length, the reward, of the great Seruice, he had done him, during his whole life.

Of the Rectour *of the Societie of* IESVS, whome I mentioned before, I haue seen some things, concerning great Fauours, which our Lord did him; but I will not insert them heer, for feare of being too long. There hapned a great trouble to him once; for he was persecuted, and found himself greatly afflicted; and I hearing Masse, one day, saw Christ our Lord, vpon the Crosse, iust then, when the Preist eleuated the Sacred Hoast; and he spoke certaine words to me, wherewith I was to acquaint him, for his comfort; and others also he spoke, by way of preuention of some future inconuenience, which might ariue; and he represented also to him, how much himself had suffered for his sake; and that therefore, he should prepare

pare himself to suffer. And this gaue him both much comfort, and much courage; and all hapned to him, iust so, as our Blessed Lord had foretold.

Of the Religious of a certaine Order, yea and of that whole Order togeather, I haue seen great things. For I haue seen them sometimes in Heauen, with white Banners in their hands; & I haue seen, as I was saying, other things of great admiration. And accordingly, I haue this Order, in much veneration; for I haue treated, and communicated with them much; and I see, that their life is agreable to that, which our Blessed Lord hath giuen me to vnderstand, concerning them.

I being one night in Prayer, our Lord beganne to vtter some words to me, which brought me to remember, how wicked, my life had been; and they gaue me confusion, and paine enough; for although they imported not anie rigour, yet they endued me with such a tender kind of feeling, and greif, that the Soule was euen dissolued by it. And we vse, in such cases, to find more benefit, in the way of knowing our selues, by some one such word as these, then we are able to acquire, in manie dayes, by our owne consideration of our miserie; for, it brings such a truth to be eué ingrauē in our Soule, as we cannot possibly denye. He represented to me also, those inclinations of mine, which I had formerly entertained, towards Creatures, with so much vanitie; and told me, that I was to put a great value vpon the desire, which he had, that I would lodge all my affectiō,

vpon him, which formerly I had employed so ill, since he would accept thereof. At other times, he bad me remember, that formerly, I had some times esteemed it for a point of honour in me, to goe against his Honour; And yet, at other times that I should remember, how much I owed him for that I vsed to commit the greatest offence against him, whilst he vsed to be doing me Fauours. If I haue anie faults (which are not few our Lord giues them so, to be vnderstood by me at those times, that it makes me euen, as it were annihilate my self; and becausse I haue manie faults, he vses me so, manie times. It hapned to me once, that a Ghostlie Father reprehended me and when I thought to comfort my self in Prayer it was there, that I found indeed, my true reprehension.

But now, (to returne to that, which I was saying) when our Lord beganne, to bring my wicked life to my remembrance, which cost me a world of teares; and when I also considered, that I had done no good thing lately, which might euen, in my opinion, deserue his Fauour, I beganne to consider a while, whether he might not perhaps, intend some new expression of goodnes to me; because, whensoeuer I find my self receauing anie particular Fauour from our Lord, it is, ordinarily, after I haue euen defeated, and annihilated my self. And I conceaue, that our Lord proceeds thus with me, to the end, that I may see the more clearly, how farre I am out of the way, of deseruing his Fauours. Short

Shortly after this, my Spirit was so absorpt, and snatcht away, that, in effect, it seemed to be absolutly out of my Bodie; at least, it was not vnderstood, that it liued in it. And then I saw the most Sacred Humanitie of our Blessed Lord, in much more excessiue glorie, then euer I had discerned before. Now this was represented to me, by a certaine admirable, and cleare notice, of his being placed in the verie bosome of his Father. Nor yet doe I know what to say, of how this was; for it seemed to me, that I saw my self present, before that verie Diuinitie, and yet, without seing my self; and I remained so amazed, and euerie way, indeed, in such sort, that I thinke there passed some dayes, before I was able to returne to my self. For, still I was conceauing, that I had the Maiestie of the Sonne of God, present with me, though it were not yet, like the former; for, this I vnderstood well enough. But howsoeuer, it remained so engrauen in my Imagination, that I cannot be ridd of it, how short soeuer the time were, wherein it was represented to me; and this is matter, both of great comfort, and of great benefit to my Soule.

Now, I haue seen this verie Vision, at three other times; and this, in my opinion, is absolutly, the most sublime Vision, which euer our Blessed Lord gaue me; and it brings the greatest improuement, and profit, with it. For it seemes, that the Soule is greatly purifyed by it; and that it doth vtterly take away all strength, from the sensualitie of

our Self-Loue. It is a vehement flame, which seems to burne vp, and euen annihilate, all the desires of this life. And since (God be blessed for it) I had already no inclination, to idle, and impertinent things, it was heer declared to me, in distinct manner, that all was vanitie; and in particular, how vaine, all the Superiorities, and Signories of this world be. And it falls out also, to be of mightie instruction, for the raising-vp of our desires, to be lodged vpon the puritie of Truth; and there remaines a high kind of adoration, and reuerence of God, imprinted after a certaine manner, which I know not how to describe; but it is of a very different kind, from whatsoeuer we can acquire, in this world. It creates also, a huge amazement in the Soule, to consider, how she euer durst, or how anie creature can presume so farre, as to thinke of offending such a Supreame Maiestie of Almighty God.

I haue declared sometimes heertofore, the effects of Visions, and such other things; but I haue also sayd already, that a Soule receaues more, or lesse profit, according to the proportion, and manner of the Vision, as the same may be, either more, or lesse. But in this, it was extraordinarily great, when I came to receaue the Blessed Sacrament; and I did then, record to my self, that incomparable Maiestie, which I had seen, and vnderstood, to be the verie same, which is in this most Holie Sacrament. And, manie times, our Lord is pleased to let me see him, in the Sacred

Hoast

Hoaſt, wherevpon the verie haire of my head would ſtand on end; and, me thought, I was euen annihilated, outright. O my deare Lord! and if thou didſt not ouerſhadow, and euen hide thy greatnes, who would euer preſume to approach ſo often, as we doe, towards the ioyning of ſuch wretched, and filthie things, as we are, to ſo high a Maieſtie, as thine. But Bleſſed be thou for euer, my deare Lord; and let the Angells, yea and all Creatures, praiſe, and glorifye thy holie name, who doſt ſo meaſure, and weigh things out, togeather with our great weaknes, as that we may be able to enioy thoſe Soueraigne Fauours of thine, without being frighted, by thy infinit power; though yet we be ſo miſerable, and vnworthie Creatures.

Me thinkes, it might happen to vs heer, as once it did to another; and this I know to be true. A certaine Labouring-man found a treaſure; and the ſame falling out to be greater, then could get roome in his ſtraight, and narrow hart, he comeing to haue this treaſure in his power, grew withall, to haue ſuch a melancholie in his minde, that he came, by little and little, to dye, by the verie care, and affliction of his thoughts, for not knowing, what he were beſt to doe, with his treaſure; Whereas, if he had not found it all togeather, but that ſome one had giuen it him, by little, and little, accommodating him, and ſuſtaining him by degrees, the poore man would haue liued contented, and it would neuer haue coſt him his life.

O thou, who art the riches of the poore! and how admirably doſt thou know, how to ſuſtaine Soules? and how carefull art thou, to ſhew them treaſures, by little, and little; and that they may not ſee too much at once; when I ſee ſo great a Maieſtie, as thine, diſſembled, as it were, and diſguiſed, in ſo ſmall a thing, as the Sacred Hoaſt? It is true, that in theſe latter times, and ſince I haue been partaker of theſe Viſions, I am euen in admiration, at ſo great a wiſdome; nor doe I know, how our Lord giues me ſtrength, and courage, to approach it. But if he, who hath done me, and doth me ſtill, ſo great Fauours, did not gouerne mee alſo heerin, it were not poſſible, that I could diſſemble the matter anie longer, but muſt cry out, and that alowd, at the ſight of ſo great wonders, as theſe.

And what now is it then, that ſo miſerable a Creature, and ſo loaden with abominations, as I am, and who haue ſpent my whole life, in ſo little feare of Almightie God, ought to find, with all reaſon, in her ſelf; to ſee, that ſhe approaches ſo great a Maieſtie, euen when he is pleaſed, that my Soule ſhould behold him, with her very eyes? How ſhall this mouth of mine, which hath vttered ſo manie words, againſt the Seruice of that verie Lord himſelf, preſume to touch that moſt Glorious Bodie of his, ſo full of pietie, and puritie; ſince the loue, which that Diuine Countenance, of ſo much beautie, ſuauitie, and affabilitie, diſcouers to vs, doth more afflict, and wound the

Soule

Soule, then doth, euen that feare, and terrour, which is bred in vs, by the consideration of his high Maiestie. But what then, should I feele in my self, who haue seen all this, whereof I speake, two seuerall times? I am really about to say, O thou my deare Lord, and the verie Glorie of my Soule, that I haue, in some kind, done thee Seruice, by the great afflictions, which my Soule hath felt in her self; and yet, alas, alas, I can hardly tell euen what I say, who am, in effect, writing this, without knowing, almost, what I doe. For I find, that I am all troubled, yea and halfe besides my self, when I goe back, to bring these things to my remembrance; though I might seem to haue some little reason, for what I say; and that I had done some little thing, for thy Seruice, O my Lord, & my God. But since I am not the owner of so much as one good thought, if thou impart it not to mee, there is nothing, for which I can pretend to be thanked; but I am still the debtour, O my Lord; and still, thou art the partie offended.

Going one day, to receaue the B. Sacrament, I saw two Diuells, with the eyes of my Soule, more clearly, then if I had seen them with the eyes of my Bodie, in a most abominable figure. And, me thought, their hornes did encompasse the very throat, of a certaine poore Preist; and I saw also my Lord, with that great Maiestie, whereof I haue spoken, placed in those hands of that Preist, which he was going to minister to me, with the same sinne-

ſinnefull hands of his;for I vnderſtood that Soule, to be then,in the ſtate of Mortall Sinne.But now, what kind of Obiect, muſt it be, to ſee thy Beautie, O my Lord, in the midſt of ſo abominable figures? Thoſe Diuells were, as all amazed, and frighted, in thy preſence, and willingly enough, would haue been gone from thence,if they could haue gotten thy leaue. This gaue me ſuch an exceſſiue trouble, that I knew not, how I ſhould be able to Communicate, through the great feare, wherein I was; as conceauing, that, if it had been a true Viſion, his Diuine Maieſtie would neuer haue permitted, that I ſhould diſcerne the miſerie, wherein that poore Soule remained. The ſame deare Lord of mine, commanded me to pray for that Soule, and told me,that he had ſuffered,what I had ſeen, to the end, that I might know,of how great power, and force, the words of *Conſecration* were;and that Almightie God would not be kept from thence, how wicked ſoeuer that Preiſt ſhould be, who pronounced them; and to the end, that I might alſo diſcerne his great goodnes, in not forbearing to put himſelf into the hands, euen of his greateſt enemies, for the good, both of me, and of all men. And I alſo vnderſtood thereby, how much more, Preiſts are obliged to be vertuous, and good, then other men; and how terrible a thing it is, to take the B.Sacrament vnworthily; and how abſolute a Lord, the Diuel is, of anie Soule,which is in Mortall Sinne. In fine, this paſſage did me a great deale of good,

and

and gaue me a moſt particular knowledge, of the very great obligation, wherein I was, to Almightie God; And let him be Bleſſed, and praiſed, for all eternitie. Amen.

Another time, I hapned to ſee another thing, which amazed me extreamly. I was in a certaine place, where a certaine perſon dyed, who had liued very ill, and that manie yeares; but during two of them, he had been ſick; and, in ſome things, he alſo ſeemed to be reformed. This man dyed without Confeſſion; but ſtill, it ſeemed to me, that he was not to be damned; though yet, whilſt men were ſhrowding him, and preparing him for Buriall, I ſaw manie Diuells poſſeſſe themſelues of that Bodie; and they ſeemed, as it were, to play with it; and yet withall, they vſed diuerſe cruelties vpon it; for they did, with certaine great hookes, both teare, and toſſe it, from one to another; and this ſtruck me into a very great feare. When afterward I ſaw him carried to be buried, with all the ceremonie, and honour, which is allowed to others, I conſidered the goodnes of Almightie God, in not permitting the Soule, euen of that man, to be defamed, but that it might be concealed, that he was an Enemie of his.

For my part, I was euen turned halfe foole, by what I had ſeen; yet, during all the performance of the Office of the Dead, there was no more Diuel, to be ſeen; but when afterward, they put the Bodie into the Graue, there was ſuch a multitude of

of them, readie to receaue the Bodie, that I was euen out of my ſelf, with beholding it; and it was no little courage, which I needed, for enabling me to diſſemble the ſeeing it. And I conſidered, how thoſe Diuels were likelie to treat that Soule, when they exerciſed ſuch an abſolute dominion, euen ouer that woefull Bodie. And I would to Chriſt, that, what I ſaw, had alſo been ſeen by ſuch, as are in Mortall Sinne; for, me thinkes, it muſt haue been of much effect, and force, towards a making them mend their liues.

Now, all this obliged mee to know, more and more, what I owed to Almightie God; and from what he had deliuered my Soule. But yet I went on, with feare enough, till I had imparted theſe particulars to my Ghoſtlie Father, as conceauing, that, perhaps, it might haue been ſome Illuſion of the Diuel, whereby to defame that Soule, though yet the man had not been held to be of very good life. But yet, it is verie true, that whether it were an Illuſion, or no, I am ſure, I neuer remember it, but it makes me afrayd.

And now, ſince I haue begunne to ſpeake of Viſions, which haue relation to ſome ſuch perſons, as are dead, I will alſo declare ſome things, concerning ſome other kind of Soules, which our Lord hath been pleaſed, that I ſhould ſee. But I will ſpeake only of few; both to be the ſhorter, and becauſe it will not be neceſſarie to ſay much, in order to the receauing of benefit thereby. They told me once, that a certaine man

was

was dead, who had been Prouinciall of his Order; but when he dyed, he was Prouinciall of another Prouince. Now, I had communicated much, with this man; and had been obliged to him, for some good offices, which he had done me. This man was of much, & many vertues; but yet when I came to know that he was dead, I was greatly troubled at it, because I was in feare, and doubt, of his Saluation, in regard, that he had been a Prelate, or Superiour, twentie yeares; which really, is a thing, that I am apt to feare, as holding it, to be a matter of much danger, to haue charge of Soules. And so I went, with trouble enough, to an Oratorie, and gaue him all that little good, which I had euer done, in my whole life; which yet was litt'e enough; and I humbly besought our Blessed Lord, that he would supply, out of his infinit merits, for as much, as that Soule might wāt, towards the freeing it self, out of Purgatorie. And whilst I was begging this Boone of our Blessed Lord, in the best manner I could, me thought he rose, as from some deep part, out of the earth, on my right side; and so I saw him mount-vp to Heauen, with very great ioy. The man was very old, before he dyed; but yet now, he seemed to me, to be but of thirtie yeares old, or rather somewhat lesse; but with much brightnes, in his face. This Vision passed away, very speedily; but yet I was so extreamly comforted by it, that the death of that man, did put mee now, to no more paine; though I had troubled manie others, about him;

for

for he was very well beloued. And thus alſo the comfort of my Soule, being ſo great, I could not poſſibly doubt, but that the Viſion was true; and no illuſion. This hapned but fifteen dayes, after his death; but ſtill I was not ſlack, in procuring, that he might be recommended to Almightie God; ſaue that, I could not doe it ſo hartily, as before I ſaw this Viſion. For, when our Lord ſhewes me ſuch things, and that yet I will pray for them afterward, I cannot chooſe but conceaue, that it is, as if I gaue an Almes to a rich man. But now, I came to vnderſtand afterward, (for the man dyed very farre off) that the death, which our Lord granted him, was of ſo great comfort to him, by the knowledge of himſelf, and by the humilitie which he expreſſed, that it was of very great edification.

Now, a certaine Religious Woeman dyed at home with vs, about a day and a halfe, before that occurred, whereof I am going to ſpeake; but ſhe had been a good Seruant of Almightie God. And another Religious Woeman reading one of thoſe Leſſons, which belong to the Office of the Dead which was recited in the Quire, for her Soule, it was my turne, to ſtand by, and aſſiſt, in repeating the Verſicle; but in the midſt of the Leſſon, me thought, I ſaw the Soule riſe vp, as the other did and ſo went to Heauen. Now, this was no Imaginarie Viſion, like the laſt; but like others, which I recounted before. Yet theſe be no leſſe certaine then thoſe others are.

There

There was also another Religious Woeman of between eighteen, and twentie yeares old, who dyed at home, in our Houſe. Now ſhe had been alwaies ſicklie, and a great Seruant of God; and very diligent in the Quire; and, in fine, a very vertuous woeman; and really, I was apt to thinke, that ſhe ſhould not haue gone to Purgatorie at all, but rather, that there would haue been ſupernumerarie merits, in regard of the manie ſickneſſes, which ſhe had endured. But yet, when we were reciting the Office, before ſhe was buryed, and ſome foure howers after ſhe dyed, I vnderſtood, that her Soule ſprung vp, out of the ſame place, and went to Heauen.

Being one day, in a Colledge *of the Societie of* IESVS, with thoſe great afflictions, and troubles, which I haue declared my ſelfe ſometimes to haue had, and ſtill haue, both in Bodie, and Soule, I found my ſelf, to be in ſuch condition, that me thought I was not able, ſo much as to entertaine one good thought. There dyed, that night, a Brother *of the Societie*, of that Houſe; and I recommending him, the beſt I could, to Almightie God; and being at the Maſſe of another Father *of the Societie*, for his Soule, I was ſeazed by a very great Recollection; and I ſaw him goe-vp to Heauen, with much glorie; yea and I vnderſtood, that our Bleſſed Lord himſelf, did accompanie him, by way of particular fauour.

A Religious man of our Order, who was a very good man, was falne very dangerouſly ſick; And

I, being then at Maſſe, grew to be in very great Recollection, and ſaw, that the man was dead; and that he went, inſtantly, to Heauen, without touching vpon Purgatorie at all; and he dyed in that verie hower, as I was told afterward. Now I wondred, that he had neuer entred into Purgatorie; but I vnderſtood, that he, hauing been a Religious man, and hauing well obſerued the Vowes of his Profeſſion, the Bulles, granted in fauour of his Order, had auailed him, towards his eſcape of Purgatorie. Now, I know not, why this was giuen to be vnderſtood, by me; but, me thinkes, it may be very well, to make me know, that a man's being a Religious man, doth not conſiſt only in his Habit; I meane, not in the onlie wearing it, as if that verie thing, did endue him with more perfection.

I will now relate no more of theſe things; for there is no great cauſe, why I ſhould; though yet our Bleſſed Lord haue done me the fauour, to ſhew me very manie. But amongſt all thoſe Soules, which I haue ſeen, I haue not vnderſtood of anie one, which eſcapes the going at all, into Purgatorie, but only this laſt Father, and that holie man, *Fray Pedro de Alcantara*, and that *Dominican* Father, of whome I ſpake before. Our Lord hath alſo been pleaſed to let me ſee the ſeuerall degrees, which they haue of glorie, by repreſenting the places to me, wherein they are; and I find, that there is a great deale of difference, between ſome, and others.

THE

THE NINE AND THIRTIETH CHAPTER.

She proceeds in the same Subiect, of shewing the great Fauours, which our Lord had done her. And she declares, how he was pleased to promise his Fauour to them, for whome she should begg it; and she relates some important particulars, wherein his Diuine Maiestie had done her particular Fauours, of this kind.

BEing once very importunate, with our Blessed Lord, that he would be pleased, to giue sight to a certaine person, to whome I had obligation, and who was almost growne to be vtterly blind, I had much compassion on him; and I feared, least our Lord would not heare me, in regard of my Sinnes. But yet he appeared to me then, as he had also done, at other times, and beganne to shew me the Wound of his left hand; and, with his right hand, he drew out the great naile, which had been thrust into it; and me thought, that some of the verie flesh, came out, with the naile. I saw well, how great paine it did import; and it afflicted me much. But he told me, that, since he had endured so much for my sake, I should not doubt, but that he would more easily be drawne, to harken to this Suite of mine; and so he promi-

sed, that he would grant, whatsoeuer I should desire; but, he knew very well already, that I would begg nothing of him, but only to his owne honour, and glorie; and that I made this present Suite, vnder that condition. He willed me also to remember, and consider, that euen, when I did him not true Seruice, I had not desired anie thing of him, which he had not granted, euen better, then my self had desired; and therefore, how much more would he be sure enough, to doe it now, when he knew I loued him; and therefore, that I should banniſh all doubt. And, I thinke, eight dayes did not passe, but that our Lord restored sight, to that person; and this was presently knowne, by my Ghostlie Father. Now, peraduenture, as I thought at first, this did not happen, by meanes of anie prayer of mine; though yet, since I saw this Vision, I haue remained with some little certaintie, that the thing was done, by the Fauour of his Diuine Maiestie, to me; and accordingly, I haue presented him with my thankes.

Another time, there was a person sick, of a very painefull infirmitie; which, because it was of an odd condition, and way, I forbeare to particularize it heer. But it was a kind of insupportable thing; and he had been troubled with it, two moneths; but he endured a torment by it, which did euen teare him in peices. Now, my Ghostlie Father went to visit him; and that, was the Rector of the Colledge, of whome I spake; and he had great compassion of the man; and told me, that,

that, in anie caſe, I muſt alſo goe & giue him a Viſit, for that he was a perſon, to whome I might handſomly doe it, in regard, that he was my Kinſman. I went, and had ſo much pittie of him, that I beganne to begg his health of our Lord, after a very importunate manner. And in this, I ſaw clearly (by the very vttermoſt, of what I am able to imagine) how much Fauour our Lord was pleaſed to doe me therein; for inſtantly, vpon the verie next day, he was abſolutly well.

I was once in a great deale of trouble, becauſe I came to know, that a certaine perſon, to whome I was much obliged, was reſolued to doe a thing, which was greatly againſt the honour, both of Almightie God, and himſelf; and yet he was very much bent, to doe the thing. Now, my trouble for this, was ſo great, that I knew not, which way to find remedie, and meanes, to make him leaue it; and indeed, it rather ſeemed, that there was none. But then, I beſought Almightie God, and that with my whole hart, that he would help vs; and till I could find it done, I ſhould be in paine. Being therefore now in this caſe, I went to a certaine Oratory, a little remote from where I was; for there are diuerſe ſuch, in this Monaſterie; and finding a Picture of Chriſt our Lord, as he was bound to the Pillar, I humbly begged of his Diuine Maieſtie, to doe me that Fauour. And preſently, I heard one ſpeake to me, in a moſt ſweet voice; but it was framed, as if it had been, in the manner of whiſtling. For my part, I was all

in a fright; and the verie haire of my head, ſtood an end; and I had a great deſire, to heare, what it ſayd to me. But when once my feare was gone, (which was alſo quickly), I remained with reſt, and ioy, and ſo great an interiour kind of delight, that it amazed me, how the onlie hearing of a voice, (and that, with the onlie eares of fleſh, and bloud; yea and without the articulation, or framing of anie one word) was able to produce ſo powerfull an operation in the Soule. But, in the meane time, I found euen thereby, that the thing, which I had deſired, ſhould be done; and ſo it was; and the paine, wherein I found my ſelfe, concerning it, was vtterly remoued, in a thing, which was not yet, as if I had found it, to be certainly granted, as it hapned to be, afterward. And I related the whole accident, to my Confeſſours, who, at that time, were two; and they both, were very learned men, and the Seruants of Almighty God.

I knew alſo of a certaine perſon, who had reſolued to ſerue his Diuine Maieſtie, in very good earneſt; and he had vſed Prayer, ſome dayes; and therein, his Diuine Maieſtie had done him many Fauours; and yet he gaue-ouer his courſe of Prayer, vpon certaine occaſions, which occurred to him; and thoſe he did not quitt, although they were full of danger. This put me to a great deale of paine; becauſe the man, whome the matter concerned, was a perſon, whome both I loued much, and whome I alſo was much obliged to

loue

loue. And, I beleiue, it had been more then a moneth, wherein I did almoſt nothing els, but begg of Almightie God, that he would bring this Soule back, to himſelf. And being in Prayer, one day, I ſaw a Diuel hard by me, with certaine papers in his hand, which he was tearing; and he ſeemed to be in a very great rage. But this put me into much comfort; becauſe I conceiued thereby, that my Suite was granted; and ſo it was, as I came to know afterward. For, the Partie had been at Confeſſion, and had done it, with great Contrition; and he returned, in ſo very good earneſt, to Almightie God, that I hope in his Diuine Maieſtie, he will euer goe aduancing in his Seruice. And let him be Bleſſed for euer, Amen.

In this particular, of procuring our Bleſſed Lord, to bring Soules out of greiuous Sinnes, vpon my humble ſuite; and of others, who were brought, manie times, to more perfection; and of freing Soules alſo out of Purgatorie; and of doing other things alſo of great importance, the Fauours of our Bleſſed Lord, haue been ſo great, that I ſhould both wearie my ſelf, and my Reader, if I would pretend to relate them. And theſe things haue hapned oftner to me, for the benefit of Soules, then of Bodies; and this is ſo very well knowne, that it hath manie witneſſes. But then inſtantly, there grew a kind of Scruple vpon me, ſince I could not chooſe but beleiue, that our Lord was pleaſed, to doe diuerſe things, through my Prayer, (for, in this caſe, and at this time I

abſtract from his goodnes,and mercye, which is euer the cheif cauſe of all things) but for the reſt, there are now ſo manie particulars, and ſo well knowne by others, that I haue no difficulty at all, to beleiue them; and I bleſſe his Diuine Maieſtie, for the ſame; and they put me to great confuſion; becauſe I ſtill find my ſelf,to be,more,and,more,a debtour. But that conſideration makes my deſire to ſerue him, encreaſe; and reviues my loue. And (which yet amazes me more,)thoſe things,which our Lord findes not to be conuenient, I can ſcarce begg of his Diuine Maieſtie, euen almoſt, although I would; and if I doe, it is with ſo little ſtrength, and ſpirit, and care, that, although I would faine force my ſelf, yet it is euen impoſſible for me, to doe it in theſe, as I doe it in thoſe others, which his Diuine Maieſtie hath a minde to effect; for,ſuch, I ſee, I am able to begg often, and that, with great importunitie; and though I carrie not the particular care of them, about me, yet me thinkes, they come before me, of themſelues. So that the difference, between theſe two wayes of asking, is ſo very great, as I am not able to declare.For,though I aske in one of theſe kinds of things, wherein, I forbeare not to vrge my ſelf to begg them of our Lord; (howſoeuer I feele not that kind of feruour in my ſelf, which I doe in thoſe other) and though they chance to import mine owne particular very much, yet is it, in effect, but as when a man chances to be toungtyed; who although he would faine ſpeake, yet

he

he cannot doe it; and if he ſpeake, it is but in ſuch ſort, as that he ſees, it cannot be vnderſtood; whereas the other, is, as when a man ſpeakes cleare, and plaine, to a man, whome he findes very willing to heare him. Or els, let vs ſay, that one of thoſe Fauours, is begged, as by a Vocall Prayer; and the other, as in a way of Contemplation, which is ſo very ſublime, that our Lord repreſents himſelf in ſuch ſort, as that we vnderſtand, that he vnderſtands vs; and that his Diuine Maieſtie is ioyed to ſee, that we begg anie thing of him, that ſo he may doe vs fauour. Bleſſed be he for euer, who giues vs ſo much; and to whome I giue ſo little. For what, O my Lord, doth anie man, who doth not euen defeate himſelf wholy for thee? and yet, *hovv much, hovv much, hovv much,* and a thouſand times more, I might ſay, *hovv much,* am I wanting heerin? And now, vpon this reaſon, I ſhould not ſo much, as once deſire, euen to liue (though yet, I haue other reaſons alſo, not to deſire it) becauſe I liue not, according to my obligation towards thee. Nay, how full doe I ſee myſelf of imperfections, and with what faintnes, and baſenes, doe I ſerue thee? And really, me thinkes, ſometimes, I wiſh, that I were euen depriued of ſenſe, that ſo I might not vnderſtand ſo very much ill of my ſelf, as I doe. Yet I beſeech him, to redreſſe it all, who knowes ſo well, how to doe it.

But I remember, I ſpake before, of my being in the Houſe of a certaine great Ladie; where, I

assure you, folkes had good reason, to haue their witts, well about them, and alwaies to be considering the vanitie, which worldlie things carrie with them. For she was a person, very much esteemed, and very much praised; and there were temptations enow, towards lesse perfection, through much distraction; whereby one might easily, haue been shrewdly taken, if I had looked vpon nothing, but my self. But he who iudgeth rightly, and lookes vpon vs, with true sight indeed, was carefull not to giue ouer the keeping me, euer, safe, in his hands. And now, when I am speaking of hauing a true, and reall sight of things, I remember, and consider, the great trouble, which anie such person, as whome it hath pleased Almightie God to endue with a knowledge of that, which indeed is Truth, must needs be put to, when he is forced to treat with others, about things, which concerne this transitorie, and troublesome world; where, all, in fine, is much disguised, and masked, as our Lord himself told me once.

But, in the meane time, manie of those things, which I write heer, are by no meanes, of mine owne head; but they haue been told me, by that Heauenlie Maister of mine. And because, in all those things, which I am wont to affirme, after a direct and positiue manner, I vse to expresse my self, by these words: *This I vnderstood*; or els, *Our Lord told me this*; I find my self with a very great scruple, of either adding, or, anie way, altering,

so

ſo much as anie one ſyllable thereof. And ſo, whenſoeuer I doe not moſt expreſly remember euerie circumſtance of anie thing, of this kind (which is to be related by me) I am wont to deliuer that, alwaies, as in mine owne name. Or els, becauſe ſometimes they proceed from mine owne particular dictamens, I vſe not to call anie thing mine, which is good in it ſelf; becauſe indeed, I am farre enough from being ignorant, that anie ſuch thing, as is in me, is good; but I affirme only thoſe things, as in mine owne name, and they are deliuered, as by my ſelf, which did not come into my vnderſtanding, and knowledge, by way of Reuelation.

But O my deare Lord, and my God! and how often doth it happen to vs heer, that euen, in the moſt ſpirituall occaſions, we are reſolued, manie times, to vnderſtand things, but iuſt ſo, as we haue a minde to vnderſtand them our ſelues; and euen they are wreſted much, from the true ſenſe. And ſo we alſo doe, in things of this world; and we will needs make our ſelues beleiue, that we muſt tax euen our owne profit in Spirit, according to the meaſure of the time, wherein we haue had anie exerciſe of Prayer. Nay it ſeemes, that we haue had a minde, to put a tax, and limit, vpon him, who, by no meanes, will be ſubiect to anie, when there is queſtion of imparting his Fauours, which he is wont to diſpoſe, when he will, and who can impart more benedictions to one, in ſix moneths, then to another, in a great multitude of yeares.

yeares. And this is a moſt certaine truth, which I haue ſeen ſo expreſly verifyed, euen with my verie eyes, vpon the inſtance of manie perſons, that I wonder, how we can ſo much as detaine our ſelues, in the leaſt doubt thereof. But I am very apt to beleiue, that a man, who hath anie talent, in trying, and knowing Spirits, and to whome our Bleſſed Lord ſhall haue giuen true Humilitie, will not be able to fall, and continue in this errour. For, ſuch a man will iudge of things, by the effects, and by the ſtrong purpoſes, and firme reſolutions, and loue of the party, who is cheifly concerned. And beſides, our Lord is wont to giue ſuch a perſon light, whereby he may be able to vnderſtand it; and by that verie light, he alſo diſcernes, the profiting, and proceeding forward, of Soules; and not by the number of yeares, wherein they haue attended to theſe things. Becauſe ſome one Soule, may, as I ſayd before, haue obtained that, in ſix moneths, which another ſhall not haue been able to get, in twentie yeares. For, as I ſayd alſo before, our Lord beſtowes thoſe things, to whome he will; and commonly he doth it to ſuch, as diſpoſe themſelues beſt, to receiue them. And in proofe heerof, I ſee, that there come now to this Houſe of ours; certaine Gentlewoemen, and Ladies, who are very young; and yet, when our Bleſſed Lord vouchſafes once to touch their harts, and to giue them a little Light, and Loue; and when, in a very ſhort time, he is pleaſed to allow, and impart ſome Regalo,

galo, and guſt of Spirit, to them, they haue not ſtayed, and pawſed; nor was anie difficultie able to offer it ſelf againſt them, which could ſtopp them; but they would be going on, without ſo much as remembring, that they were to liue, by eating their meate; and they ſhut themſelues vp, for euer, in a Houſe, without hauing ſo much, as anie Reuenue, vpon which to liue; like perſons, who put no manner of eſteem, vpon anie thing of this world, for the loue of him, who, they know, loues them. And they giue ouer, euen all things, all at once; nor haue they anie will at all, which is meerly their owne; nor doe they vnderſtand it, to be poſſible, that euer they can receaue diſguſt, by enduring ſuch a ſtraight ſhutting vp; but all of them, offer-vp their whole ſelues, in Sacrifice, to the honour, and glorie of Almightie God.

And now, how willingly, and iuſtly doe I allow them, to haue gotten the Start of me heerin? and how mightily ought I to be aſhamed, and euen confounded, in the preſence of Almightie God, to ſee, that, what his Diuine Maieſtie could not finiſh in my Soule, through my fault, in ſuch a multitude of yeares, ſince I vſed Prayer, and wherein he beganne to doe me Fauours, he hath yet been able to accompliſh in them, within three moneths; yea and euen, with ſome of them, in three dayes, with doing them alſo farre leſſe Fauour, then to me. Though yet withall, it be very true, that our Bleſſed Lord, payes them ſo well,

for

for their paines, that they are all, very farre, from being sorrie, to haue done, whatsoeuer they haue done, for the loue of him.

For this purpose, I could wish, that we might call to minde, how manie yeares they are, since we made our Profession, and haue vsed Mentall Prayer. Not yet, for the giuing them anie trouble, by making them turne back, who haue made a great deale of way, in a short time, and to get them to goe, but our pace, which is as much as it would be, to make them, who flye like Eagles (through the Fauours, which it hath pleased Almightie God, to doe them) to walke the slow dull pace of a shackled Hen; but to the end, that we may grow, to carrie the honour of his Diuine Maiestie, in our eye. And then, if we find these Sisters of ours, to be humble, whome we see, to be so forward, in the way of Spirit, that we should giue them, still, the raynes. For certainly, our Blessed Lord, who hath done them so great Fauours already, will neuer suffer them to break their necks, by falling downe, as from some dangerous rock. They commit, and trust themselues in the hands of Almightie God; for, this benefit doe they reape, by the truth, which Faith teaches them; and shall not we also trust them there? but *must we limit, and confine them, by our narrow measure, according to the meanenesse, & straightnes of our owne poore mindes? No, no; this must not be; but rather, if our selues cannot ariue to be owners of those strong affections, and firme re-

*An excellent & most vsefull Document.

solu-

ſolutions, which abound in them (for, theſe things cannot be well vnderſtood, without experience) let vs procure to humble our ſelues, and not condemne them? For els, by ſeeming to haue a care of their aduantage, and profit, we ſhall depriue our ſelues, of our owne; and we ſhall alſo looſe the occaſion, which our Lord ſhewes vs ſo faire, for our owne greater humilitie; and that we may the better vnderſtand, how much is wanting to vs; as alſo, how much more abſolutly, thoſe other Soules are likelie to be vntyed, and freed, from worldlie things, then ours; and how much neerer, they are approached to Almightie God, then we; ſince we ſee, that his Diuine Maieſtie, is come ſo much cloſer vp, towards them, then vs. For my part, I can vnderſtand no more, in this caſe; neither indeed haue I anie deſire to vnderſtand more, then that I had rather haue ſuch Prayer, as hauing been obtained, and exerciſed but a ſhort time, might be found to haue great effects, and which inſtantly appeare, (for it is impoſſible, that a Creature ſhould be content, to throw away a whole world at once, vpon the onlie reaſon, of pleaſing Almightie God, without a mightie force of loue) then ſuch an other kind of Prayer, as ſhould haue continued manie yeares; and yet neuer, in fine, haue made an end of reſoluing vpon anie more, at the laſt, then at the firſt, to doe anie thing, for the pure loue of Almightie God, vnleſſe it be ſome poore, little, fidling bable, which is no bigger, then a

graine

graine of Salt, which hath neither bulke, nor weight, but is ſuch, as that anie Bird might be able, to carrie it away, in her Bill. For, I confeſſe, we hold it not, for a matter of much effect, and mortification, when a great account is made, of doing ſuch, and ſuch things, for the loue of our Lord, which indeed, it is both pittie, and ſhame, that we ſhould vnderſtand, and value, at anie rate, though perhaps we ſhould doe neuer ſo manie, of that kind. For my part, I am but one of theſe, and am apt, not only to forget the Fauours of Almightie God, but euen to ouervalue mine owne poore endeauours. I ſay not yet, but that his Diuine Maieſtie will vouchſafe to put ſome value euen vpon little things, through his owne great goodnes; but as for me, I would make no account thereof; nor, in effect, ſo much as ſee, that I doe them, ſince they are but a kind of Nothing. But yet, pardon me, euen heerin, O my deare Lord; and blame me not, if I procure to comfort my ſelf, with thinking of this little kind of Somewhat, ſince I am able to ſerue thee ſolidly, in Nothing; but if really I found my ſelf able, to ſerue thee, in things, which were indeed of weight, and moment; I would be farre from making account of theſe things, of Nothing.

O how happie are thoſe perſons, who are able to doe thee Seruice, in great matters? And certainly, if hauing enuie of them, and entertaining earneſt deſires, of being able to doe the like, might be taken by thee, for good payment, vpon

true

true account, from this poore Seruant of thine, infallibly I would not ſitt-out at pleaſing thee. But the truth, my deare Lord, is this, That directly I am good for nothing; though yet, thou maiſt well giue me value, ſince thou loueſt me ſo much.

But now, it hapned lately, by a *Breue*, which came from *Rome*, that this Monaſterie ſhould be vncapable of Reuenue; ſo that now, it may be eſteemed to be finiſhed. It coſt vs ſome trouble to effect it; and I remained with much comfort, to ſee things ſetled. And reflecting vpon the difficulties, which I had mett; and praiſing our Bleſſed Lord, for his being pleaſed, to haue partly ſerued himſelf of me heerin, I applyed my ſelf a little, to looke back, vpon all the paſſages of the whole buſines. And really, it is very true, that in euerie one of thoſe particulars, wherein there might be anie apparance, that I had contributed ſomewhat, I find manie imperfections, and errours; Sometimes, of little Courage; and ſometimes alſo, of little Faith. For, till I ſaw all that accompliſhed, which it had pleaſed our Bleſſed Lord to tell me before, of what ſhould be done, concerning it, I did neuer, in a reſolute, and aſſured manner, make an end, of fully beleiuing, that it would be; though yet withall, it be true, that I alſo could not tell, how to doubt it. Nor knew I, how all this could ſtand togeather; but it ſeemes, that manie times, it looked in my eye, as if it muſt be impoſſible, on the one ſide, and yet, it could not be doubted, on the other; I meane, it could not be firmly be-

leiued, but that the thing, would be done. Yet, in fine, I found, that there was this aduantage in it, That our Lord himself, did all the good, which was done; and I, all the ill; and so I would thinke of it, no more: becauſe, if I did, I ſhould be ſure to ſtumble vpon manie faults of mine owne. But, Bleſſed be he, for euer, who, when he is diſpoſed, knowes how to fetch good out of them all; Amen.

I ſay then, that it is no leſſe, then a kind of dangerous thing, to goe rating, and meaſuring the only yeares, wherein anie bodie may haue had the exerciſe of Mentall Prayer. For, though perhaps, there may be a peice of Humilitie in the conſideration thereof, yet withall, it alſo ſeemes, that there is a kind, of I cannot tell what, as if there were a ſhew, that a bodie would conceiue, that he had deſerued ſome little thing, for his paines. I ſay not, that theſe yeares of Prayer, haue not their worth; and ſo we ſhall be well payd for them; but yet, if anie Spirituall perſon ſhall conceiue, that, for the manie yeares, wherein he hath vſed Mentall Prayer, he deſerue thoſe great Regalo's, and guſts, I hold it for a moſt infalliblo truth, that he ſhall neuer get vp, to the topp of Libertie of Spirit. But, is it not, on the other ſide, enough, that he hath obtained ſo much Fauour of Almightie God, that he defends him ſo farre, as to hinder him from committing ſuch Sinnes, as he fell into, before he was a man of Prayer? but that now, forſooth, he will needs proceed with

with his Diuine Maieſtie, for the Fauours, which he hath receaued from his holie hand, as thoſe Debtours vſe to doe, who goe to Suite with Creditours, for their owne money. Perhaps (as I was ſaying) this may looke, in ſome lights, like a peice of profound Humilitie; but for my part, I cannot thinke ſo; but rather, that it is a part of boldnes. And I am ſure enough, that I (with being not humble at all) neuer durſt preſume, ſo farre. Yet perhaps, this laſt is true, in regard, that I neuer did God anie ſeruice; and therefore, I haue begged no ſuch fauour at his hands; whereas yet, if I had thought, I had deſerued, I ſhould haue been more earneſt, then anie other, in deſiring of our Lord, that I might be payd, euen heer, for my paines. And yet, I doe not ſay, but that a Soule may goe encreaſing, by this meanes; and that God will make him amends, if his Prayer haue been humble; but yet ſtill, I would faine haue that point forgotten, which ſpeakes of reckoning-vp thoſe manie yeares of our Seruice of our Lord. For, all that, which we are, anie way, able to doe, is fitt to make a man, euen caſt the gorge, in compariſon of the leaſt dropp of that bloud, which our Bleſſed Lord ſhed for vs. And if, beſides, it be moſt really true, that, by doing Seruice to Almightie God, we come to be his debtours, ſo much the more, what manner of thing is it, that we ſhould fall vpon begging recompences of that kind; ſince, if we pay a Farthing of the old debt, there returnes a Bill of a thouſand Ducats vpon

vs, for a new Loane. But, in fine, for the loue of our Lord, let vs leaue to passe these iudgements, which indeed, ought not to be ours, but his. This course of making Comparisons, is not excellent, euen in temporall, & familiar things; and what then shall it be, about that, which God only knowes? And his Diuine Maiestie shewes well, that he knowes it; for he resolues, when he thinkes fitt, to pay the last Labourer, as well as the first.

I haue written that, which heer I haue deliuered in these three sheets of paper, at so manie seuerall times, and in so seuerall dayes, (for I had, and haue still, as I haue sayd, so little meanes, and leasure) that I had forgotten what I was beginning to say, about this Vision, which followes. But I saw, whilst I was in Prayer, a great Feild, lying open, and all apart, by it self; and that, much companie, of different kindes, was round about me, which circled me in. And it seemed to me, that euerie one, had offensiue weapons in his hands, wherewith to hurt me; as Lances, Swords, and Daggers; and others had also long Staues. In a word, I could not get from thence, by anie way, or meanes, without danger of death; especially, being alone, and not hauing anie one Creature, to helpe me. And being thus, in so great affliction of Spirit, that I knew not what to doe, I lifted-vp mine eyes towards Heauen, and saw Christ our Lord; not then in Heauen, but yet very high, and farre off from me, in the ayre, who reacht-forth his hand, towards me, and fauoured me from

from thence, in such sort, that I feared neither all that other people, nor yet these; who all, were vnable to doe me hurt, how much soeuer they should desire it. This Vision seemes, at the first sight, to be without anie fruit, or good effect, at all; but it hath yet done me a great deale of good, because I haue vnderstood what it signifyed. For, I saw my self, in that encounter, shortly after, and knew, that it was nothing els, but this Vision; and I also came to know it, to be a verie picture, or rather Mappe of the world. For, as manie as are in it, (abstracting euer from those few, who apply themselues, to doe our Lord particular Seruice) seemed to carrie Armes against this wretched Soule of ours; as namely, Honours, Estates, Delights, and the like. For it is euident, that the Soule is all ouercast with a Nett, before it be aware; at least, all these things, doe the best they can, to endanger, and wrapp vs vp, fast enough; as namely, Freinds, Kindred, and (which amazes me more) euen such, as are vertuous people. For, I found my self afterward, to be extreamly prest, and euen oppressed, by them: they conceauing, in the meane time, that they carried themselues very well; but, the while, I knew not at all, either how to defend my self, or what to doe.

O my deare God! and if now I should stand, to relate the kindes, and differences of those troubles, which set vpon me, at that time, euen after all those others, whereof I spake before, how well might this, be able to serue for a

meanes, to make a man wholy abhorre all things? It was, me thinkes, the verie greateſt perſecution of all, that euer I had endured. For, I felt my ſelf, at ſome times, ſo ſtraightly ſet vpon, on all ſides, that I only found remedie, by lifting-vp mine eyes to Heauen, and crying vpon Almightie God. And I remembred very well, what I had ſeen, in this laſt Viſion of mine; and it did me a great deale of good, towards a not putting confidence in anie Creature; for, there is no one of them firme, and ſtable; but only God alone, is entirely, and truly ſo. But, in theſe great afflictions, our Lord hath euer vſed to ſend me ſome perſon, or other, who, in his name, might lend me his hand; as he ſignifyed to me, that he would; and as he did alſo let me ſee, in this laſt Viſion; and ſo I tyed not my ſelf to anie thing, but only to pleaſe our Bleſſed Lord; and this hath ſerued to ſuſtaine this poore little vertue, which I had, in deſiring to ſerue him; And let him be Bleſſed for euer.

But finding my ſelf once, very vnquiet, and in great diſorder, yea and in skirmiſh, or rather, in a verie battaile, without being able to recollect my ſelf; yea and my thoughts being ſcattered, and diſperſed, vpon things, which were not very perfect; and withall, not ſeeming, to be ſo vtterly vntyed from all things, as I vſed; and being ſtill, ſo wicked, as I was, I grew afrayd, that the Fauours, which our Bleſſed Lord had done me, might fall-out to be Illuſions; and, in fine, I then remained, with a very great obſcuritie of minde.

But

But now, whilſt I was in this paine, our Lord beganne to ſpeake to me, and told me, that I muſt not be thus afflicted; but that, finding my ſelf in that caſe, I might well vnderſtand euen thereby, in how great miſerie I muſt remaine, if once he ſhould depart from me; and that there was to be no ſecuritie at all, as long as we ſhould continue in this world. I was alſo giuen to vnderſtand, how well our labour was employed, in this ſtrife, and warre, ſince it would not faile to be followed, with ſo high a reward. And, me thought, our Bleſſed Lord had compaſſion of them, who liue in this world; but that I muſt not thinke, that he had forgotten me; yea and that he would neuer leaue me; but yet ſo, as that ſtill I muſt alſo doe my part, in helping my ſelf. And this did our Bleſſed Lord declare to me, with a kind of tender compaſſion, and Regalo, accompanied with certaine words, whereby ſo high Fauour was done me, as I need not ſtand heer to relate. And theſe others, which follow heer now, his Diuine Maieſtie ſaith alſo often to me, with demonſtration of moſt particular loue: *Thou art novv, grovvne to be mine; and I am thine.* And thoſe words, which I am euer wont to ſay (and to my thinking, I ſay them, with much truth) are theſe, which follow: *VVhat care I, O my Lord, for my ſelf, but only for thee?* But I confeſſe, thoſe words of his, to me, are of great Regalo to my hart; though yet with all they be of exceſſiue confuſion, when I remember, what kind of Creature I am. But * it ſeemes, that

* *A true noble, & moſt generous hart.*

I haue need of more courage, for the receauing of thoſe high Fauours, then euen for the enduring of vnſpeakable afflictions. But now, when theſe things are in motion, all the poore good actions of my life, are vtterly forgotten by me; and then, it is only repreſented to my minde, how wicked I am; and that, without anie diſcourſe at all, of my vnderſtanding; ſo that euen this alſo, doth ſeem, at certaine times, to haue ſomewhat of the Supernaturall in it.

Sometimes, there come alſo vpon me, ſo earneſt, and euen eager appetites, of receauing the Bleſſed Sacrament, that I know not, whether it can be poſſible for me, to expreſſe them to the full. It hapned to me one morning, that it rayned ſo extreamly, as to ſeem no way fitt for me, to goe out of doores. But yet, being once gotten abroad, I was already growne alſo, to be ſo farre out of my ſelf, through that deſire of Communicating, that although they had ſet Lances, euen pointed, and held faſt againſt my verie Breaſt, me thought I could haue paſſed, euen through them all; and how much more then, through water. And as ſoone, as I ariued at Church, I was taken with a very great Rapt. For, me thought, the verie Heauen was open, and not by one ouerture only, as I had ſeen it, at other times; and I ſaw another alſo aboue that, vpon which I vnderſtood (by way of a certaine notice, which I am not able to expreſſe) the Diuinitie it ſelf to be, though yet I ſaw not the Diuinitie. And, me thought, it

was

was vpheld, by certaine Mysterious Beasts; and I was considering, whether they were not those of the Euangelists. But yet, I neither saw, how the Throne was seated, nor who was sitting in it; but only a great multitude of Angells, about it; which seemed to me, of much more beautie, beyond comparison, then those others, which I had seen in Heauen, before. And I haue been thinking, whether they might not haue been Seraphins, or Cherubins; for, they are very different, in point of glorie; and they seemed, to be mightily inflamed. And as for the glorie, which then I felt in my self, it can neither be written, nor spoken; nor is anie one able, euen to thinke it, but such as had been made partakers of it, by seeing it. But I vnderstood, that absolutly all that, which possibly can be desired, was there; and that, all togeather. I there, saw nothing at all, distinctly; but they told me (yet I know not, euen who they were) that the thing, which I might there be able to doe, was, to vnderstand, that I could vnderstand nothing; but that I might see from thence, the direct Nothingnes of all things, in comparison of that. And really, it is very true, that my Soule, from that time forward, hath found it self, as if it were extreamly affronted, and confounded, to obserue, that it was able to pause at all, vpon anie thing created; and how much more then, to be affected, either by it, or to it. For, all things seem to me, euer since, to be neither better, nor more, then the verie nest of an

Ant. But I Communicated; and was at Maſſe; though yet I knew not, how I could be ſo. I conceiued, that the time had been very ſhort; and wondered, when the Clock ſtruck; and ſo found, that it was two howers, wherein I had remained, in Rapt, and glorie.

I was amazed after this, to know, how, by approaching ſo neer to this Fire, which ſeemed to come from aboue, out of the true loue of Almightie God, it was yet, in no power of mine at all, to get the leaſt ſparke thereof, but only, when his Diuine Maieſtie was pleaſed to impart it. For, how much ſoeuer I deſire it, and how earneſtly ſoeuer I procure it, and would defeate, and euen deſtroy my ſelf for it, there is yet no meanes at all, to obtaine it. But now, this Rapt of mine, ſeemes euen to haue conſumed the faults, and lukewarmneſſe, and miſeries of the old man, as the Phenix is ſayd to doe her ſelf, out of whoſe aſhes, when ſhe is burnt, ſprings another Phenix. For iuſt ſo, doth a Soule become abſolutly an other kind of thing, with deſires wholy different, and with a courage ſo encreaſed, that now ſhe ſeemes not, to be, what ſhe was before: but now beginnes to walke, with a new kind of puritie, in the way of our Lord. And I iuſt then beſeeching his Diuine Maieſtie, that it might proue to be ſo, in my caſe, and that I might now, at leaſt, beginne, as vpon a new account, to doe him ſeruice, he ſpake theſe words to me: *Thou haſt made a good Compariſon; and ſee, that thou forget it not; that ſo, thou*

thou maiſt euer procure to improue thy ſelf.

And being once, in the ſelf-ſame doubt, whereof I ſpake euen now, whether theſe Viſions were of God, or no, our Lord appeared, and ſpake theſe words, to me, with ſome rigour: *Hovv long, O yee Sonnes of men, vvill yee continue to be hard of hart?* And he alſo willed me then, to examine my ſelf well, vpon this one Interrogatorie: *VVhether I vvere entirely giuen to him, for his, or no; and that if I vvere giuen ſo, and vvas ſo, I ſhould beleiue, that he vvould not ſuffer me to be loſt.* And whereas I afflicted my ſelf much, vpon his vttering that exclamation aforeſayd, he returned with great tendernes, and Regalo, and told me, that he would not haue me afflict my ſelf; and that he knew already, that I, for my part, would not faile, to apply my ſelf wholy to that, which might be for his Seruice; and that ſo, he would alſo doe all that, which I deſired of him, againſt Illuſions; and ſo he was pleaſed to doe that thing in particular, which then I humbly begged, at his hands. For he willed me, to looke in, vpon the Loue, which went encreaſing daily, in me; for, thereby, I might beſt vnderſtand, that the Diuel had no part in it; and that I muſt not thinke, Almightie God would conſent, that the Diuel ſhould haue ſo much power ouer the Soules of his Seruants, as to be able to giue me ſuch a claritie of vnderſtanding, togeather with ſuch a depth of repoſe of minde, as I poſſeſſed. And he gaue me alſo further to vnderſtand, that ſuch, and ſo manie men,

hauing

hauing told me, that theſe Viſitations were of Almightie God, I ſhould doe ill, if I did not beleiue them.

Being alſo another time, in Prayer, vpon *S. Athanaſius's* Creed, of *Quicumque vult*, &c, I was giuen to vnderſtand the manner, how there was one onlie God, and three Perſons; and this, in ſo perſpicuous, and cleare a kind, that I was no leſſe comforted by it, then amazed at it. This alſo, did me very much good, towards the giuing me encreaſe of knowledge, concerning the greatnes of Almightie God, and of his wonders; and for all ſuch occaſions, alſo, as wherein I thinke of the Bleſſed Trinitie, or heare ſpeech thereof. And now, me thinkes, I conceaue, how all that Myſterie ſtands, very well; and it contents me much.

One day, vpon the Aſſumption of our B. Ladie, the Queen of the Angells, our Lord was pleaſed to doe me the Fauour, in a certaine Rapt, that her riſing vp into Heauen, was repreſented to me, togeather with the ſolemnitie, and ioy, of that Ceſtiall Court, wherewith ſhe was receiued; as alſo the place, which ſhe held. To tell, what kind of thing this was, I am no way able. The glorie, which euen my Spirit had, to ſee, that hers is ſo great, was euen extreame; and I remained with great effects, and improuements, by it, towards a wiſh, of vndergoing yet, greater afflictions, for the loue of our Lord. And ſo it alſo gaue me encreaſe of deſires, to ſerue our B. Ladie, ſince both her dignitie, and merit, was ſo great. And being

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one day, in a Colledge *of the Societie of* IESVS, and the Brothers of that Houſe, being then in act of receauing the B.Sacrament, I ſaw a very rich Canopie, ouer their heads; and this, at two ſeuerall times; but yet, when others Communicated there, I ſaw it not.

THE FOVRTIETH CHAPTER.

She proceeds in the ſame Diſcourſe, by relating the great Fauours, vvhich our Lord shevved her; vvhereby, good inſtruction is to be gotten. And vvith the end of this Chapter, she ends alſo the Diſcourſe of her Life.

BEing once in Prayer, the delight, and guſt, which I felt within my ſelf, was ſo great, and I found my ſelf ſo vnworthie of ſo high a Fauour, that I beganne, vpon that occaſion, to conſider, how much better I had deſerued to poſſeſſe that place in Hell, which was prepared for me; for I could neuer forget, in what manner I had ſeen my ſelf there. And now, by meanes of this conſideration, my Soule beganne to be ſo much more inflamed, that my Spirit grew to be in Rapt; and ſo, as that I know not, how to expreſſe it. For, me thought, I was put, and plunged, into that Maieſtie, which I had formerly vnderſtood; but yet ſo, as that I know not, how to declare it. In this

this Maieſtie, a certaine Truth was giuen me to be vnderſtood, which indeed, is the accompliſhment of all Truth; but yet ſtill, I know not how to relate it. For, I ſaw nothing at all diſtinctly; but they told me theſe words, though yet I ſaw not, who ſpake them; only I knew, that it was the verie Truth; *This, vvhich I doe for thee, is no ſmall matter; but rather, it is a thing, for vvhich thou ovveſt me much; becauſe one of the mischeifs, vvhich grovves to the vvorld, proceeds from not knovving the Truths of Scripture, vvith cleare truth; but, one tittle thereof, ſhall not faile.* Now, as for me, I conceaued, that my ſelf had alwaies beleiued this; yea and that all Catholiques, had alſo beleiued it. But then, he ſayd to me againe: *Alas, my Daughter, there be fevv, vvho loue me, according to Truth; for, if they did, I vvould not conceale my ſecrets, from them. But, doſt thou knovv, vvhat it is, to loue me, according to Truth? It is, to knovv, that all is a Lye, vvhich is not acceptable to me. Thou ſhalt be able, to ſee this clearly (vvhich novv thou doſt not vnderſtand) by the profit, vvhich thy Soule ſhall get.* And ſo accordingly, I haue ſeen it performed; our Lord be euer praiſed, for it. For, all things, which are not addreſſed to the ſeruice of Almightie God, doe, of late, ſeem to me, ſo hugely to be vanitie, and a lye, that I am no way able to expreſſe, how much I vnderſtand thereof. And it moues me to deep compaſſion, to ſee men liue, in ſo great obſcuritie, and ignorance, as they are in, of thy Truth; but, by this meanes, I haue benefited my ſelf, in manie kindes, whereof I will heer

heer relate some; and some I shall not be able to relate.

But our Lord sayd one word to me heer, in particular, with very great fauour; though I know not also, how this was. For I saw nothing; but I remained in such sort, after it, as I know not also, how to declare, euen that. Only I am sure, I remained, by this meanes, with a very great kind of fortitude, and firme purpose, of accomplishing euen the least part of Holie Scripture, with the vttermost of all my power. And nothing, me thinkes, could offer it self to me, through which I would not passe, for the making this good.

There remained also a truth, of this Diuine Truth, which was now represented to me (though yet still, I know not how) so deeply engrauen in my hart, that it made me carrie a new kind of profound reuerence to Almightie God. For it imparts a notice of his high Maiestie, and great Power, after such a manner, as cannot be described; but I can only vnderstand, that it is a mightie kind of thing. I now remained also, with a very great desire, neuer to speake at all, but of things, which were substantially true; and which might iustly take precedence of all that, which vses to be treated of, in this world. And so I then began, to find it paine enough, euen to liue in it. This Vision left me with a Regalo of great tenderness; and with humilitie also. It seemed to me, that our Blessed Lord did giue me to vnderstand much, in this Vision, though yet, without my vnder-

vnderſtanding the manner of it; but, at leaſt, I was ſatisfyed well enough, that it was no Illuſion. I ſaw nothing; but yet I vnderſtood the great benefit, which there is, in not making account of anie thing, which brings vs not neerer to Almightie God; and ſo I came to vnderſtand, what kind of thing it is, for a Soule, to walke in Truth, in the preſence of the ſame Truth. That, which I vnderſtood, is, that our Lord gaue me to vnderſtand, That he is verie Truth it ſelf. And all theſe things, at which I haue now pointed heer, I vnderſtood ſometimes, by their being ſpoken to me; and at other times, without ſpeech; but yet, ſome of this latter ſort, with more clearnes, then thoſe others, which were imparted to me, by words. I vnderſtood very great truths, of this Truth; and better, then if manie learned men had taught me; and at leaſt, it ſeemes to me, that they could, by no meanes, haue ſo imprinted them, in my minde, nor ſo clearly haue giuen me to vnderſtand the vanitie of this world. This Truth, which, I ſay, was giuen me to be vnderſtood, is verie Truth, in it ſelf; and it is both without beginning, and without end; and all other Truths, depend vpon this Truth; and all other Loues, vpon this Loue; and all other Greatneſſes, vpon this Greatnes; though yet, all this be deliuered by me, with much obſcuritie, in compariſon of that clearnes, wherewith our Bleſſed Lord was pleaſed to impart it. And, how very well doth this become the great power of that Maieſtie, to leaue

ſuch things as theſe, imprinted vpon the Soule, whereby ſuch aduantages are obtained? and that, in ſo ſhort a time? O Greatnes, and Maieſtie of my Omnipotent Lord! What is it, which thou art doing? Conſider who it is, to whome thou art vouchſafing ſuch Soueraigne Fauours? Doſt thou not remember, how this Soule hath been a verie Abyſſe of Lyes, and euen a deep Sea of vanities? and all this, through faults of mine owne? For, notwithſtanding that thou gaueſt me an inclination, which, naturally, did abhorre lying, yet I made my ſelf apt to treat, in manie things, after a deceiptfull kind of manner. How art thou able, O my God, euen to endure me? and how can ſo great goodnes of thine, be ſhewed to one, who hath ſo ill deſerued it? and how can ſo much Sinne againſt thee, be compatible with ſuch Fauours, as theſe?

Being once reciting the Howers of the Diuine Office, with all the reſt of the Religious, my Soule beganne to be ſuddainly recollected; and it ſeemed to me, that it was like ſome cleare, and pure Looking-Glaſſe, without hauing anie thing, either on the back, or on the ſides; or yet, either aboue, or below, which was not all, extreamly cleare. And in the very Center thereof, Chriſt our Lord was repreſented to me, iuſt ſo, as I am accuſtomed to ſee him. It ſeemed to me, that I ſaw him clearly, in all the parts, and portions of my Soule, as in a Looking-Glaſſe; and ſo alſo (though I know not how) our Bleſſed Lord him-

ſelf, was engrauen therein, with ſuch a certaine kind of enamoured communion, or communication of himſelf, as I cannot poſſibly expreſſe. Only I know, that this Viſion hath been of very great benefit to me; and is ſo, whenſoeuer I remember it; and eſpecially, after I receaue the B. Sacrament. But it was giuen me heerby to vnderſtand, that the being of a Soule in Mortall Sinne, is to make this Glaſſe be couered, with a great Clowde, and ſo, to become very darke; and that ſo, though our Bleſſed Lord be euer preſent with vs (yea ſo very preſent, as that he giues vs our verie Being, thereby) yet then, he is not ſo repreſented, as to be ſeen by vs; And that, when the Caſe concernes Heretiques, the Looking-Glaſſe is directly broken, which is farre worſe, then to be obſcured. But now, there is a very great deale of difference, between my ſeeing it, and my relating it; for it is no eaſie thing, to giue it well to be vnderſtood. Yet this hath done me a great deale of good, and hath affected me with much pittie, and greif, for thoſe times, wherein my ſelf did obſcure my Soule, in ſuch ſort, as that I was not able to behold, and ſee this Bleſſed Lord of mine. It ſeemes alſo to me, that this kind of Viſion, is very vſefull to perſons, who are of much recollection, to teach them a way of thinking of our Bleſſed Lord, as in the moſt interiour part of their Soules; which is a conſideration, that will ſtick cloſeſt to them, and will be of much more benefit, then if they were conſidered, as anie way out of

of the Soule, according to what I haue ſayd els where; and it is contained alſo in ſome Bookes, which are written of Prayer, about the way, how wee are to ſeeke Almighty God. In particular, the Glorious S.Auguſtin ſpeakes much, of, how Almightie God is not to be fought, either in pleaſures, or externall places; and that he could be no way found ſo well, as in our ſelues; and this is certainly the beſt way; nor haue we need, to goe further off, then to our verie ſelues; and much leſſe, to clime-vp as high as Heauen, for this purpoſe; for, this will but diſtract the Soule, and wearie the Spirit; and doe vs nothing neer, ſo much good.

I will alſo giue an aduertiſment heer, to the end, that if anie bodie haue anie ſuch thing, as that, he may know the better, how to carrie himſelf. It happens in ſome very great Rapts, (when the time is paſt, wherein the Soule remaines in Vnion; and when all the Faculties, and Powers thereof, are abſorpt; and which laſts, as I haue ſayd, but a little while) that the Soule remaines recollected, and is not able, in the exteriour way, to returne to it ſelf; but thoſe two Powers, and Faculties, namely the Vnderſtanding, and Memorie, remaine, as with a kind of frenſie, in great diſorder. This, I ſay, happens ſometimes; and eſpecially, with Beginners. And I haue been thinking, whether it may not proceed, from this, That our condition is naturally very weake, and not able to admit, and endure ſo great a ſtrength

of Spirit, and that the Imagination is weakned alſo much; and I know, that this happens to ſome. Now, for my part, I am apt to thinke, that it were not ill, to oblige them, in ſuch caſes as this, to leaue-off their Prayer, for that time, and to goe recouering that, afterward, which they looſe then; that ſo, all come not on togeather; for it may chance proue an occaſion of much inconuenience. And of this, we haue experience; and that it will fall out, to be of better proofe, to conſider very well, how much our ſtate of health, and ſtrength, is able to endure. But in all things, there will be need of good experience, and of a good Directour; for, when once the Soule is growne to be in theſe tearmes, manie things will come to offer themſelues, wherein there will be need enough of ſome bodie, with whome it may be fitt, to conſider them. And if anie ſuch man can not be found, when he is ſought, our Bleſſed Lord himſelfe, will not be wanting to him, ſince he would not be wanting to me, I being the wicked Creature, I am. For I beleiue, there are very few, who are come to haue experience of ſo manie things; and if there be not experience, it is in vaine, to thinke of anie remedie, which will not rather ſerue to diſquiet, and afflict the Soule. But the beſt is, that our Bleſſed Lord will take euen that trouble of ours, in account, for ſome ſatisfaction of himſelf; and therefore it will fall-out, to be better done, to conferr thereof, as I haue formerly ſayd; and ſo will it alſo be, to proceed,

ceed, after this manner, in all those things, where-of I am speaking, now. For I see, that this imports very much, (especially if they be woemen, who are concerned) and that they doe it, with their Ghostlie Father; and that he also be such, as is fitt. At least, there vse to be more woemen, then men, to whome our Lord imparts these Fauours; and this I vnderstood first, from the holie man, *Fray Pedro de Alcantara*; and I haue also seen my self, that they proceeded, and profited more, in this way of Spirit, then men doe. But he gaue excellent reasons, for his opinion, which need not be inserted heer; for they all, are in fauour of woemen.

Being, one day, in Prayer, there was suddainly represented to me (but it was without my seeing anie thing formed; and yet it was with a very extraordinarie kind of claritie) how all things, are seen, in Almightie God; and how he hath them all, in himself. To know, how to set this downe, is in no power of mine; but it remained deeply imprinted in my Soule; and it was one of the greatest Fauours, that euer had been done me, by our Blessed Lord; yea and of those also, which put me to greatest confusion, & shame, when I considered the manie sinnes, which I had committed against him. I well beleiue, that, if our Blessed Lord had been pleased, to let me see this Vision, at some other time of my life; or if they could see him now, who are sinning against him, they would neuer haue the hart, and courage, to doe, as they doe. It appeared to me, as I sayd; but yet

ſo, as that I cannot expreſly affirme, that I ſaw anie thing diſtinctly; but yet ſomewhat, me thinkes, muſt needs haue been ſeen by me, ſince I am able to make this verie compariſon; but that it fell out, to be ſignifyed, by ſo delicate, and ſubtile a way, as that the vnderſtanding is not able to reach it; or els, that I haue no skill of all thoſe kinds of Viſions, which ſeem not to be Imaginarie; but yet, in ſome of theſe, I verily thinke, that perhaps there may be ſomewhat of the Imaginarie, or formed apparance, and that only the Powers of the Soule, being then in Rapt, they are not able afterward, to aſſigne anie Forme, in what manner our Lord repreſents himſelf to them there; and how he is pleaſed, that they ſhall enioy him. But yet, ſuppoſing it to be the Diuinitie, in the forme of ſome bright Diamond, which were bigger, then the whole world; or els, of ſome Looking-Glaſſe, after the manner of what I ſayd before, concerning the Soule, in that other Viſion, (ſaue that this is in ſo ſuperiour a kind of manner, that I am not able to expreſſe it) and that all that, which we doe, is ſeen in this Diamond (it being ſuch, as that all things are ſhut-vp in it, becauſe there is nothing, which can get out of that greatnes) it was a thing extreamly to amaze me, to be able to ſee, in ſo very ſhort a time, ſo manie things togeather, in this bright Diamond. And ſo was it alſo matter of extreame compaſſion, and greif, for me (euerie time, that I remember my ſelf) to haue ſeen, that things, ſo very vglie, and fowle, as my

ſinnes

sinnes were, should be representted, and shewed, in that so clearnes of light. And the truth is, that whensoeuer I remember it, I know not, how it comes to be possible for me, to endure it; and I did really then remaine, so extreamly out of countenance, and ashamed, that, me thinkes, I could not tell, where to hide my head.

O * that some Creature, or other, were able to giue this Truth to be well vnderstood, by these people, who commit dishoneſt filthie sinnes; that so they might come to know, that they are not secret; and that Almightie God, hath reason to be very sensible of those wrongs, since they are acted so truly, in the presence of his Diuine Maiestie; and that we carrie our selues, with so base irreuerence, before him. * *Great effects of a Vision.*

I saw heer also, how iustly Hell is deserued, for anie one Mortall Sinne; because it is past our power, to vnderstand, what a most greiuous crime it is, to commit it, in the presence of so great a Maiestie; and what an vnspeakable distance, and dissimilitude, is found, between that, which he is, and that, which our Sinnes are; and how it appeares euen heerby, so much the better, how great his mercie is, since, notwithstanding he knowes all this, he yet endures vs.

It hath also made me consider, that if such a Vision, as this, can leaue the Soule so extreamly astonished, and amazed, what kind of thing, will the Day of Iudgement proue to be, when this Maiestie of Almightie God, will shew it self, with

all clearnes; and so we shall also clearly see, what kind of things, our sinnes were, which we committed against him. O my deare God! what blindnes is this, which hath seazed me? And I haue often been amazed, euen whilst I haue been writing this; and your Reuerence need be amazed at nothing, but how I am able euen to liue, whilst I am looking both vpon these things, and my self. But let him be eternally blessed, who hath vouchsafed to endure such things, at my hands.

Being once in Prayer, in very great recollection, and with much quietnes, and sweetnes, me thought I was all emcompassed with Angells, and very neer to Almightie God; and I beganne to be an humble Suiter to his Diuine Maiestie, for the benefit, and aduantage of his Church. And he gaue me to vnderstand, the much good, which a certaine Order should doe the world, in these latter times; and the great courage, wherewith the Members thereof, should defend, and vphold the Catholique Faith.

Being once in Prayer, neer the Blessed Sacrament, there appeared to me a certaine Saint, whose Order was in some decay. He had a great Booke in his hands, which he opened, and willed me to read certaine Letters in it, which were very legible, and large; and they sayd thus: *In future times, this Order shall flourish, and haue manie Martyrs.*

Another time, being at Matins in the Quire, six or seauen persons were represented, and set before

before me; and I held them to be of the same Order, and they had Swords in their hands. And I conceaue, that I was giuen thereby to vnderstand, that they should defend the Faith. For, being in Prayer, another time, and rapt in Spirit, me thought, I was in a very spatious feild, where manie were, who fought; and they of this Order, did also fight, with great feruour. They had their faces beautifull, and much inflamed; and they beate multitudes of men, downe to the ground, and killed others. This battaile seemed to be giuen against Heretiques; & I haue seen this Glorious Saint, diuerse times; and he hath told me some things, and giuen me thankes, for the Prayers, which I make for his Order; and he hath promised, that he will recommend me to our Blessed Lord. I specifye not the seuerall Orders heer, least some should be offended at it; and if our Lord shall thinke it conuenient, he may declare them. But euerie Order should procure, and so should euerie particular man of euerie Order, that, in so great a necessitie, as that, wherein the Church is, at this time, they might be able to serue her. For, happie are those liues, which may come to loose themselues, vpon this occasion.

A certaine person desired me once, to beg of Almightie God, that I might vnderstand, whether or no, it would be for the Seruice of his Diuine Maiestie, that he should take a Bishoprick. I did so; and our Lord made me this answer, after I had Communicated: *When he shall vnderstand, with*

all clearnes, and truth, that true Dominion consists, in possessing nothing, he may take it, then. Giuing thereby to vnderstand, that, whosoeuer is to be a Prelate, must be very farre, from so much as desiring it; and yet further, from procuring it.

These Fauours, and manie other also, haue been, and are still, very ordinarily shewed, by our Blessed Lord, to this sinnefull Woeman; which, me thinkes, are not very necessarie, to be related; since by those, which are deliuered already, my Soule, togeather with the Spirit, which our Lord hath giuen me, may be vnderstood. But let him be euer blessed, who hath had so much care of me.

He told me once, by way of comforting me, that I must not afflict my self (and this he did, with most tender loue) for that, in this life of ours, we could not possibly, be alwaies after the same manner; but that sometimes, I would be in feruour; and sometimes without it; Sometimes, with vnquietnes, and temptations; and Sometimes, without them, and in peace; but that I must hope in him, and feare nothing.

Being one day in thought, and doubt, whether it were not a kind of being tyed to Creatures, to be glad to be with such persons, as with whome I treat the busines of my Soule; and to loue both them, and others also, whome I find to be the Seruants of Almightie God; and to receaue comfort, by being with them; he told me, that, if when a man is dangerously sick, the presence of

a Phisitian, seemes euen to restore him to health, it would not be a vertue, to forbeare to be glad of him, and to loue him. And what (sayd he) wouldst thou haue done, if it had not been for such, as they? That he disliked not, that conuersation should be held with such, as were good, but that my words must euer be well considered, and holie; and that so, it would be rather profitable to me, then hurtfull, not to giue-ouer communication with them. Now, this imparted a particular comfort, to me; for sometimes, it would seem, to be a hauing too great a tye, vpon creatures, which made me once incline, to giue-ouer the custome I had, to conuerse with them. But our Lord did euer counsaile me, in all things; yea so farre, as euen to tell me, how I should carrie my self, towards weake persons; and some others also; and he neuer layes the care of me, aside. But I am much troubled, to find, that I am good for so little, in his Seruice; as also, that I can doe the lesse, through my spending more time, then I wish, vpon so weake, and wasted a bodie, as mine is.

As I was once in Prayer, and the hower of our going to rest, came on, I found my self, in a great deale of paine; and knowing, that my ordinarie Vomits would ariue; and obserueing my self to be so tyed-vp, to these cares; and the Spirit, on the other side, desiring to haue some time, for it self, I grew to be euen so tired, that I beganne to be greatly afflicted, and to weepe much; and that happens

happens very often to me. And this condition puts me to such a kind of anger, that, me thinkes, I doe, in those times, euen abhorre my self; though yet it be true withall, that I doe not abhorre my self indeed; nor yet am wanting, in what is necessarie for me; and I rather pray God, that I take not more care of my self, then I should; and so, I feare, I doe. But now, whilst I was in this greif, our Lord appeared to me, and regaled me very much; and told me, that I must endure these troubles, and goe-through with them, for loue of him; and *That my Life, vvas necessarie, yet*; And so, me thinkes, I neuer see my self in anie very great paine, which I value, since I resolued to serue this Lord, and Comforter of mine, with all my power. For, though he permitted me to suffer a little, yet would he still be assisting me so withall, that I esteem not my selfe to doe much, in desiring to suffer afflictions, for his sake. So that now, me thinkes, there is no reason, why we should euen desire, so much as to liue, but only, to the end that we might suffer; and accordingly, this is the thing, which I begg, with most affection, of Almightie God. And sometimes, I am saying to him, with my whole hart: *O Lord, let me either suffer, or dye; for I begg no other thing of thee, for my self.* And now it vses to comfort me, to heare the Clock strike; for so, me thinkes, I am growne, a little neerer, to the seeing of God (though it be but a little) because one hower more of my life, is past. At other times, I find my self in such sort, that

that I neither take much pleasure, in liuing; nor yet, me thinkes, haue anie great minde, to dye; and so, in the meane time, I remaine with a kind of stupiditie, and darknes of minde, in all things; and, manie times, I also haue some troubles. And since our Lord was pleased, that those Fauours should be publiquely knowne, which his Diuine Maiestie vouchsafed to shew me (as he himself had told me, some yeares agoe, that they should be; which gaue me vexation enough; and it is not a little, that I haue endured therein, as your Reuerence knowes; for euerie bodie, will vnderstand things, as he listes) I comfort my self yet, with this, that it hath not ariued by my fault; because I neuer spake of anie such thing, but either to my Ghostlie Fathers, or others, who I knew euen by them, had vnderstood thereof. For of this, I was very warie, euen to extremitie; though yet perhaps, I abstained not, so much, for respect of humilitie, as in regard, that I had paine enough, to tell euen my Ghostlie Father thereof; and therefore, how much lesse would I impart things of this nature, to others.

But now, I earnestly desire, that Almightie God may receaue glorie by it; howsoeuer there be some, who murmure at me, very much, vpon this occasion; though euen yet, I thinke, they may peraduenture doe it with good zeale. And there are others, who are afrayd, euen to treat with me, in anie kind; yea and euen to receaue the Confession of my Sinnes; and others, say also other things.

things. But howſoeuer, ſince I vnderſtand, that it hath pleaſed our Bleſſed Lord, to reduce manie Soules, by this meanes; and becauſe I ſee clearly, and remember continually, how much, himſelf would be pleaſed to endure, for the gaining of one Soule, I allow my ſelf to take little trouble for anie thing, which men can ſay of me. And I know not, whether or no, this may not haue been a part of the cauſe, why his Diuine Maieſtie hath placed me, in this little Corner of the world, where I am ſo ſhut vp; and where I thought, there would be no more memorie of me, then of a thing, which was dead. But their forgetfulnes, was not ſo great, as I wiſhed; and ſo I haue been conſtrained, to ſpeake ſometimes, with ſome perſons. Yet howſoeuer, I am not now, where the world may eaſily, ſee me; for it ſeemes, that our Lord hath been pleaſed, to driue me from Sea, to this Port; and I truſt, in his Diuine Maieſtie, that it will proue a very ſafe one, for me. And ſince now I am out of the world, and find my ſelf, in the companie of few (but they, holie Creatures) I looke downe, vpon the world, as from a place, which is very high; and ſo, it is growne to be of little moment with me, what they, below, doe either ſay, or thinke. And I would make much more account, to vnderſtand, that anie one Soule ſhould haue profited to the weight of one little graine, in God's Seruice, by my meanes, then of all, which can be ſayd of me, in anie kind. For, ſince I haue found my ſelf, in this place, our Lord hath

hath been gratiouſly pleaſed, that all the deſires of my hart, might haue no other ayme, but this. And he hath alſo giuen me, euen a kind of ſleep, in this life, which makes me find, that whatſoeuer I ſee, is but dreaming; nor am I able to ſay, that I reape, either much contentment, or trouble, by anie thing of this world. And if yet ſome things giue me anie, it paſſes away, with ſo very great ſpeed, that I euen wonder at it; and it makes but iuſt, ſuch a kind of impreſſion vpon me, as a thing would doe, whereof I had dreamt. And it is a moſt perfect truth, that although I ſhould afterward haue a peice of a minde, either to be glad of anie contentment, or to be ſorrie for anie miſaccident, and trouble, it is really no more now, in my power, but iuſt ſo, as anie man, who were diſcreet, would take, either trouble, or ioy, from a dreame of his owne. For now, our Bleſſed Lord hath already been pleaſed, to awake, and open the eyes of my Soule, from out of that follie, wherein it was. And whereas, by my not being mortifyed, nor dead, to the things of this world, I was wont to haue much feeling of ſuch things, as hapned, his Diuine Maieſtie is pleaſed now, that I ſhould looſe my true ſight, no more.

In this ſort, Sir, doe I liue now; and I beſeech your Reuerence, my good Father, to begg of Almightie God, that he will either take me quickly to himſelf; or els I beſeech his Diuine Maieſtie, that he giue me power to ſerue him. In the meane time, I humbly beſeech Almighty God, that what

I haue written heer, may be of some vse, to your Reuerence; and I haue not done it, without some trouble, in regard of the little conueniences, which I had. But happie shall this trouble be, if I haue chanced, to hit anie thing, right; and if our Blessed Lord may receaue some one only Act of praise, by occasion thereof, I shall esteem my self to be fully payd, though your Reuerence should burne it all, immediatly after. And yet I could not wish, that this should happen, till those three persons had seen it, of whome you know; since they are, and haue been, my Ghostlie Fathers. For, if the thing be not right, it will be fitt, that they giue-ouer the good opinion, which they haue of me; and if, on the other side, things goe well, I know, that they are good, and learned men; and they can not be ignorant, from whence it comes; and they will giue him glorie, and praise, who hath done it, though he haue serued himself of me, therein. I beseech his Diuine Maiestie, that he will euer keepe your Reuerence, in his holie hand, and make you so great a Saint, as that you may, with Spirit, and Light, illuminate this miserable Creature, who hath so little of the humble, in her, and so much of the bold, as that she hath presumed to write of these high things. I beseech our Lord, that I haue not erred therein, whilst my ayme, and desire was, to hitt right, and to obey; and that, in fine, there might be somewhat, for which our Lord should be praised For, this is that great Suite, which I haue made to him,

him now, theſe manie yeares; and, ſince I haue wanted workes, whereby to comply with this ayme, I haue aduentured, vpon commandment, to ſee, if I could put this irregular, and confuſed Life of mine, into ſome order; though yet, without employing, either anie more attention, or time, then that, which was meerly neceſſarie, for writing it. And ſo I haue only ſet thoſe things downe, which haue occurred to me, and paſſed in me, with all plainnes, and truth, to the verie vttermoſt of my endeauour. And I humbly beſeech our Bleſſed Lord, that, ſince he is ſo powerfull, as that, if he will, he can; he may be pleaſed, to make me wholy, hitt the marke, in performance of his holie will; and not permit, that this Soule be loſt, which his Diuine Maieſtie hath been pleaſed, by ſo manie wayes, and euen cunning induſtries of his, yea and that, ſo manie times, to deliuer, and bring out of Hell, and to draw vp, ſo very cloſe, to himſelf; Amen.

Benedictus Deus.

This Booke vvas finished (the firſt time) in Iune, in the yeare of our Lord God, 1562. It vvas vvritten then, vvithout diſtinction of Chapters; but aftervvards, it vvas vvritten by this glorious Saint, againe; and then it vvas diuided into Chapters; and manie things alſo vvere added by her, vvhich hapned aftervvard; and particularly, that, vvhich concerned the Foundation of the Monaſterie of S.Ioſeph, of Auila.

A Letter, vvritten by the Glorious S. Teresa, *to her Ghostlie Father, vvho had commanded her to vvrite her ovvne Life, for asmuch as might concerne her manner of Prayer, and the Fauours, vvhich our Lord had shevved her. And this Letter did she send to him, togeather vvith the Booke it self.*

THe Holie-Ghost be alwaies with your Reuerence, Amen. It would not be amisse, euen almost to exaggerate the Seruice, which now I am doing to your Reuerence, that so you may, euen hold your self, to be the more obliged, to take very particular, and great care, to recommend me to Almightie God. And this, I may well presume to doe, since it hath cost me so very deare, to see my self thus, set downe in writing; and to haue brought, by occasion rhereof, so manie of my great miseries, to my remembrance; though yet withall, I can affirme with much truth, that I haue had farre more auersion, and trouble, vpon my declaring the Fauours, which it pleased our Blessed Lord to doe me, then it would haue been for me, to discouer, euen the offences themselues, which I haue committed against his Diuine Maiestie. But, in the meane time, I haue done, what your Reuerence hath commanded, in order to the enlarging my self, in this Discourse; though yet withall, it be vpon condi-

condition, that your Reuerence will alſo doe, what you promiſed, in tearing whatſoeuer you ſhall not like. I had not finiſhed ſo much, as the verie reading it ouer, after I had written it, euen now, when your Reuerence ſent to me, for it; and therefore, it may very well chance, that ſome things are ill declared; and others, very vnneceſſarily repeated; for, the time, wherein I was able to doe it, did proue ſo very ſtreight, and ſhort, that I could not ſo much, as looke ouer, what I had written. I beſeech your Reuerẽce, to reforme my errours heerin; and to command it, to be coppied out, and ſent to *Father Auila*; for els, perhaps, the hand may be knowne to others. But I deſire very much, that ſuch order may be taken, as that he may ſee it; ſince I partly beganne to write it, vpon that deſigne. For, when he ſhall once conceaue, that I goe in a way, which is right, I ſhall be very much comforted by it; and ſo, when I ſhall haue vſed this diligence, there will be, on my part, no more to be done. I humbly pray your Reuerence, to doe, in all things, as you ſhall thinke fitt; and conſider, that you are euen obliged, therein, for ſuch an one, as truſts her Soule in your hands, after ſo confident a manner. As for yours, I will be recommending it to our Bleſſed Lord, all the dayes of my life; and I beſeech you therefore, make great haſt to ſerue his Diuine Maieſtie, to the end, that you may be the better able, to doe me alſo fauour, with him; ſince your Reuerence will eaſily ſee (by that, which

goes in companie of this) how well, all your endeauours will be employed, in going on, as you haue already begunne; and in bestowing your self totally, vpon him, who hath giuen himself, so wholy to vs, without anie limits at all. Let him be blessed, and praised, for euer; and for my part, I hope, through his mercie, that both your Reuerence, and my self, shall, one day, grow to vnderstand more clearly, the great blessings, which he hath been pleased to shew vs both, that so, we may be able to praise him, for all Eternities, Amen.

A TABLE

A TABLE

OF THE CHAPTERS.

1. CHAP. THe Saint shevves hovv our Lord began to ſtirr-vp her Soule, in her Childhood, to the performeing of vertuous actions; And of the helpe, vvhich it giues, in order to this end, to be borne of vertuous Parents.

2. CHAP. She shevves hovv she vvent looſeing in the vvay of vertue; And hovv very much it imports, to conuerſe, in Childhood, vvith vertuous perſons.

3. CHAP. She treats, hovv her falling into vertuous company, vvas the occaſion of her returning to avvake good deſires in her ſelfe; And hovv our Lord began to giue her ſome light, of the errour, vvherein she had formerly been.

4. CHAP. She relates, hovv our Lord aſsiſted her to force her ſelfe to take the Habit of Religion, and of the many infirmityes, vvhich our Lord began to bring vpon her.

5. CHAP. She proſecutes the relation of the great infirmityes vvhich she had, and of the patience, vvhich our Lord gaue her in them; and hovv benefits are dravvne out of miſcheifes; as vvill be ſeen by a certaine particular, vvhich happened to her, in the place, vvhither she vvent to be cured.

6. CHAP. She treates of hovv much she ovved our Lord for his giueing her conformity, to his holy vvill, in ſo great afflictions; And hovv she tooke the Glorious Saint Ioſeph,

ſeph for her Interceſſour, and hovv aduantagious that Deuotion proued to be.

7. CHAP. *She shevves, by vvhat degrees, and meanes, she vvent looſeing the Fauour vvhich our Lord had done her, and hovv ill she began to liue. And she alſo declares the harme there is, in not maintaining Clauſure, in the Monaſteryes of Religious vvoemen.*

8. CHAP. *She treates of the great good it did her, tovvards the not looſeing her Soule, not to haue vvholy giuen ouer her Prayer; As alſo, vvhat an excellent remedy that is, tovvards the gaining of vvhatſoeuer good thing, vvhich is loſt. She perſvvades all Creatures to vſe it; and declares the great benefit thereof; and although vvee should aftervvard leaue it, yet ſtill it vvould proue a great good, to haue vſed ſo great a helpe, for ſome time.*

9. CHAP. *She declares, by vvhat meanes our Lord began to avvake her Soule, and giue her light in ſo great darknes; and to ſtrengthen alſo her vertues, that ſo she might offend him no more.*

10. CHAP. *She beginnes to declare the Fauours vvhich our Lord did her, in Prayer; and ſpeakes of that, vvherein vvee may be able to helpe our ſelues; And hovv much it alſo imports vs, to vnderſtand the ſaid Fauours, vvhich our Lord is pleaſed to doe vs. She humbly deſires of him, to vvhome she ſends this account of her ſelfe, that vvhatſoeuer she shall declare, from hence forvvard, may remaine in ſecret vvith him, ſince he had commanded her to ſet dovvne, in ſo particular a manner, the Fauours, vvhich our Lord vvas pleaſed to doe her.*

11. CHAP,

11. CHAP. *She declares, in vvhat the fault consists, of not obtaining to loue God vvith perfection, in short time. She beginns to deliuer it by a Comparison, vvhich containes Fovvre Degrees of Prayer. And she treats heer of the first, vvhich is very profitable, for beginners; & for those also, vvho haue no sensible delight, or gust, in Prayer.*

12. CHAP. *She prosecutes her Discourse of the first State, or Degree of Prayer, and declares, hovv farre vvee may ariue, of our Selues, by the Fauour of our Lord; And of the hurt it brings, to desire that our Spirit may rise to Supernaturall, and Extraordinary things, till our Lord himselfe be pleased to ordaine it.*

13. CHAP. *She proceeds in this First Degree, and State of Prayer, and giues aduise against some temptations, vvhich the Deuill is sometimes vvont to bring. This Discourse is very profitable.*

14. CHAP. *She beginns to declare the Second Degree of Prayer, vvherein our Lord is already pleased, to giue the Soule more particular gusts; vvhich she declares, to the end, that she may make them be vnderstood to be Supernaturall. This Discourse is very much to be noted.*

15. CHAP. *She prosecutes her Discourse of the same matter, and giues some aduise, hovv persons are to carry themselues, in this kind of Quiet Prayer. She treates, hovv, many Soules come to ariue to this Degree of Prayer, and that fevv passe beyond it. The particulars vvhich are touched heer, are not only very profitable, but very necessary.*

16. CHAP. *She treates of the Third Degree of Prayer, and goes declareing some very high points; and vvhat*

a Soule vvhich ariues thus farre, may be able to doe; and vvhat effects, theſe ſo great Fauours of our Lord, are accuſtomed to vvorke. The ſenſe heerof is very fitt to raiſe the Spirit high, in the praiſes of Almighty God; and it is alſo of great conſolation for the Soule, vvhich ariues to this State.

17. CHAP. *She proſecutes the ſame Argument about this Third Degree of Prayer; and finishes the declaration of the Effects; vvhich vvorkes and declares alſo the diſaduantage, vvhich the Memory, and Imagination, are vvont to bring, in this caſe.*

18. CHAP. *She treates of the Fourth Degree of Prayer. She beginnes heer, to declare, in excellent manner, the great dignity, to vvhich our Lord aduances that Soule, vvhich is exalted to this State. It ſerues to animate men much, to endeauour that they may ariue to ſo high a condition, ſince it may be obtained in this vvorld, through the goodnes of our Lord, though it cannot be deſerued. Let this be read vvith conſideration, and care.*

19. CHAP. *She proſecutes the ſame Diſcourſe, and beginns to declare the effects, vvhich this degree of Prayer, vvorkes in the Soule. She perſvvades men earneſtly not to turne back, nor to giue-ouer their Prayer, though they should happen to fall; euen after they had receiued theſe Fauours. She ſpeakes of the great harme, vvhich vvill ariue to them, if they doe otherwiſe. This Diſcourſe is much to be noted; and it is of great conſolation for vveake perſons, and Sinners.*

20. CHAP. *She treates of the difference betvveen Vnion, and Rapt, and declares vvhat kind of thing a Rapt is.*

She

She ſpeakes alſo of the bleſsing, vvhich that Soule hath, vvhich our Lord, through his goodnes, brings thither, and of the effects, vvhich Rapts vſe to produce. This Diſcourſe is of much admiration.

21. CHAP *She proſecutes, and finishes this laſt Degree of Prayer. She declares vvhat the Soule findes therein, vvhen she returnes to liue againe, in the vvorld; and the light alſo, vvhich our Lord giues, concerning the deceipts, and errours of the ſame vvorld. This Chapter deliuers excellent Doctrine.*

22. CHAP. *She treats of hovv ſecure a vvay it is, for perſons vvho giue themſelues to Contemplation, not to raiſe-vp their Spirit to high things, vnleſſe our Lord raiſe them vp; and that the Humanity of Chriſt our Lord, is indeed to be the meanes, tovvards the higheſt Contemplation of all others. She ſpeakes alſo of an errour, vvherein once she vvas. This Chapter containes matter of much profit.*

23. CHAP. *She returnes to declare the courſe of her Life, and hovv she firſt beganne to thinke of grovving to greater perfection, and by vvhat meanes she did it. This Chapter is very profitable for ſuch as are to gouerne Soules, in order to Prayer; and to make them knovv, hovv they are to behaue themſelues in their beginnings, and of the benefit she reaped, by knovving it her ſelfe.*

24. CHAP. *She proſecutes the former Diſcourſe, and shevves, hovv her Soule vvent profiting, vvhen once she had begunne to obey. She alſo declares, for hovv little purpoſe it ſerued, to reſiſt the Fauours of Almighty God; and hovv his Diuine Maieſtie, vvent daily imparting them to her, after a more compleat manner.*

25. CHAP. *She treates heer of the vvay and manner of vnderſtanding thoſe vvords or Speeches, vvhich Almighty God is pleaſed to vtter to the Soule, though yet vvithout hearing any voyce, or ſound; and of ſome errours, or abuſes, vvhich may happen heerin; and hovv the right may be knovvne, from the vvrong. It is of much vſe, and profit, for ſuch as ſee themſelues in this degree of Prayer; for it is declared very vvell, and the Doctrine containes great inſtruction.*

26. CHAP. *She proſecutes the ſame Diſcourſe, and goes relating, and declareing ſuch things, as happened to her; vvhich made her to looſe feare, and to be ſtrengthned in a beleife, that it vvas a good ſpirit, vvhich ſpake to her.*

27. CHAP. *She treates of another vvay, hovv our Lord inſtructs a Soule, and giues her to vnderſtand his vvill, after a very admirable manner, vvithout any Speech at all. She alſo declares a certaine Viſion, and great Fauour, vvhich our Lord shevved her; and this Viſion vvas not Imaginarie. This Chapter is very much to be noted.*

28. CHAP. *She treates of the great Fauours, vvhich our Lord did her; and hovv he appeared to her, the firſt time. She declares, that it vvas a Viſion, vvhich shevved it ſelfe by vvay of the Imagination; and diſcouers the great effects, and teſtimonyes, vvhich ſuch things leaue in the Soule, vvhen they are of Almighty God. This Chapter is of great inſtruction, and deſerues to be noted, much.*

29. CHAP. *She proſecutes the Diſcourſe, vvhich she had begunne, and relates ſome high Fauours, vvhich our Lord*

Lord vvas pleaſed to doe her; and vvhat his Diuine Maieſtie did further, for the ſecuring, and encouraging her minde, and for the enabling her to anſvver her Contradictours.

30. CHAP. *She returnes to recount the courſe of her life; and hovv our Lord gaue remedye to many of her troubles, by bringing that Holy man* Fray Pedro de Alcantara, *of the Order of the* Glorious S.Francis, *to the place vvhere she vvas. And she declares the great temptations, and invvard troubles, vvhich ſometimes she endured.*

31. CHAP. *She treates of certaine exteriour temptations, and repreſentations of the Deuill; and of the torments, vvhich he gaue her. She ſpeakes alſo of other things, vvhich are very fitt, for the aduiſe, and inſtruction of ſuch perſons, as are vvalking on, in the vvay of Perfection.*

32. CHAP. *She treates hovv it pleaſed our Lord, to put her, in Spirit, into a place of Hell; vvhich she ſaid she had deſerued for her Sinnes. She relates vvhat vvas repreſented to her there; vvhich vvas but a kind of shaddovv of ſuch things, as are ſuffered in that place. She beginnes alſo to declare the vvay, and manner, hovv that Monaſtery vvas founded in* Auila, *vnder the name of* S.Ioſeph.

33. CHAP. *She proceeds in the ſame Subiect, of the Foundation of the Monaſtery of the* Glorious S.Ioſeph. *She declares, hovv she vvas commanded to attend to that buſines; and of the time, vvhen she forbore to follovv it; and of ſome troubles, vvhich she had; and hovv she vvas comforted in them, by our Bleſſed Lord.*

34. CHAP.

34. CHAP. *She declares, hovv at this time, she vvas neceſſarily to goe from that place; and she shevves the cauſe thereof; and hovv her Superiour commanded her to goe, for the comfort of a certaine Lady, vvho vvas much afflicted. She beginns to treat of that, vvhich hapened to her there, and of the great Fauour, vvhich it pleaſed our Lord to doe, by her meanes, in ſtirring-vp a very principall perſon to doe him very great Seruice; and hovv aftervvard she receiued much Fauour, and protection from him. This is an admirable Diſcourſe, and very much to be noted.*

35. CHAP. *She proſecutes the ſame Subiect, about the Foundation of this Hovvſe of our* Glorious Father S. Ioſeph. *She ſpeakes of the Degrees, by vvhich our Lord came to appoint, that holy Pouertie should be ordained there; and of the cauſe vvhy she came from that Lady, vvith vvhome she vvas; and of other things alſo, vvhich ſucceeded.*

36. CHAP. *She proſecutes the Subiect, vvhich she had begunn, and declares the finall concluſion of this Monaſtery of the* Glorious S. Ioſeph *of* Auila; *and of the great contradictions, and perſecutions, vvhich the Religious vvoemen vvere put to ſuffer, euen after they had taken the Habit; and of the many troubles, and temptations, vvhich she vvas faine to vndergoe; and hovv his Diuine Maieſtie drevv her out of all, vvith victorie, to his ovvne praiſe, and glorie.*

37. CHAP. *She treates of the effects, vvhich vſed to remaine in her Soule, vvhen our Lord had done her any Fauour, and she accompanies this Diſcourſe, vvith very profitable Doctrine. She declares alſo, hovv vvee are to procure,*

procure, and greatly esteem, the gaining of one degree of glory more; and how vve must not, for any trouble, or paines, forsake those benefitts, & blessings, vvhich are euerlasting.

38. CHAP. *She treates of some great Fauours, vvhich our Lord vvas pleased to doe her, as vvell in acquainting her vvith certaine Secrets of Heauen, as by giueing her other great Visions, and Reuelations. She declares also the effects, vvhich they left in her Soule, and the great benefitts, vvhich she obtained by them.*

39. CHAP. *She proceeds in the same Subiect, of shevving the great Fauours, vvhich our Lord had done her. And she declares, how he vvas pleased to promise his Fauour to them, for vvhome she should begg it; and she relates some important particulars, vvherein his Diuine Maiestie had done her extraordinary Fauours, of this kind.*

40. CHAP. *She proceeds in the same Discourse, by relating the great Fauours, vvhich our Lord shevved her; vvhereby good instruction is to be gotten. And vvith the end of this Chapter, she ends also the Discourse of her Life.*

41. *A Letter, vvritten, by the* GLORIOVS S. TERESA, *vvhich she sent, together vvith the Booke, to her Ghostly Father.*

APPROBATIO.

HÆc vita S. Tereſæ, primùm Hiſpanico ſermone à ſe conſcripta, & poſtea taliter edita, nunc verò feliciſſimè Anglicè reddita per Ill^m virum M.T. iuſſu R^mi Antuerpienſis, à me attentè perlecta fuit; & in eadem nihil dum reperi, vel contra fidem, vel quod poſſit, meo iudicio, pias & Chriſtianas aures offendere; imò, cùm amorẽ eius ſeraphicum, vndique lucentem ac inflammantem, Lector experiatur, cenſeo digniſſimam, vt in communem etiam Catholicorum Anglorum vtilitatem imprimatur. Antuerpiæ 5. Auguſti M. DC. XLII.

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